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June  
1997



in

# TUNE

SOUTH JERSEY'S MUSIC MAGAZINE

on the inside

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Coushins**

**HOME**  
at last

**LIVE**

eleven

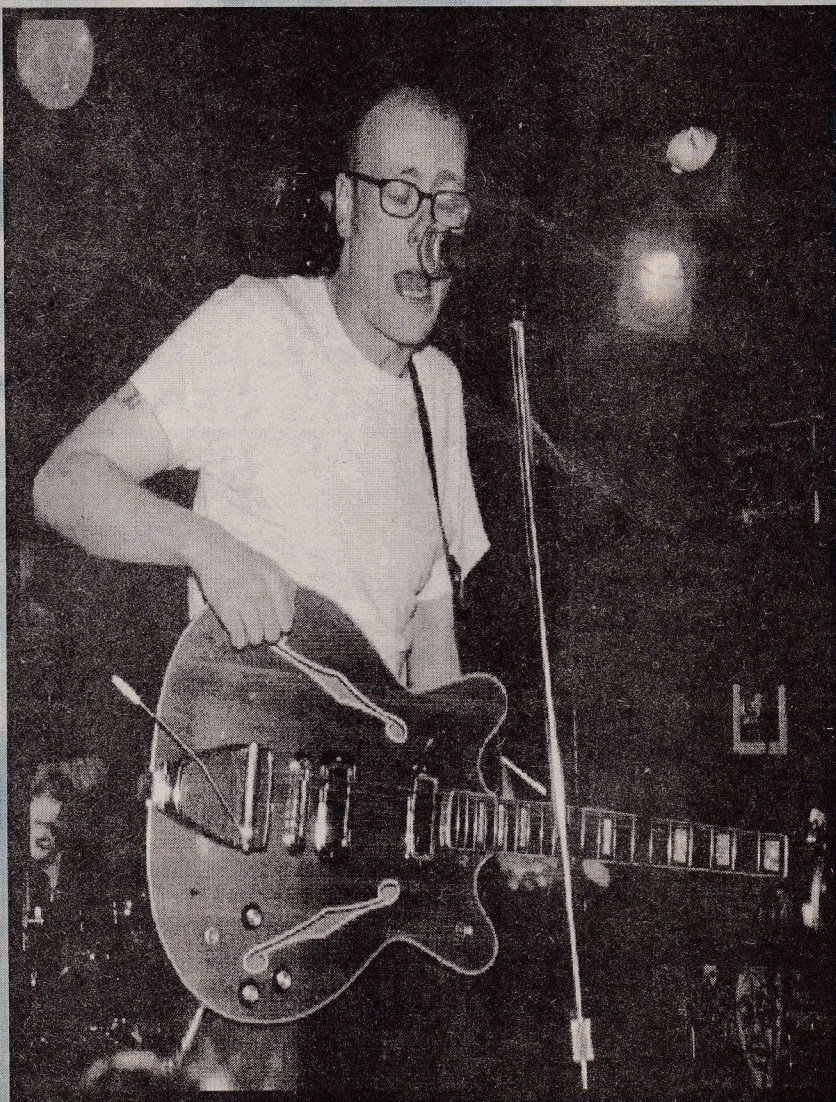


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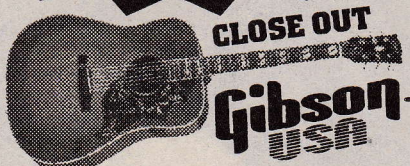
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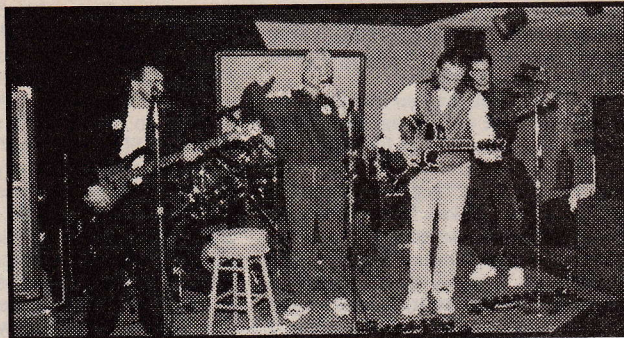
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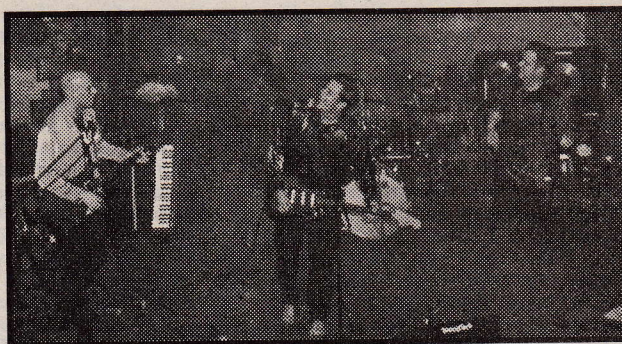
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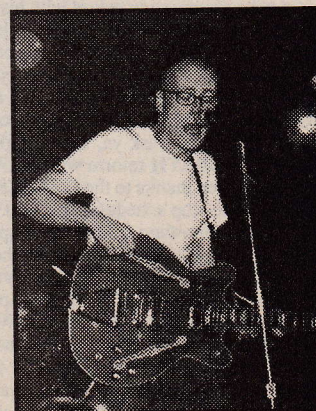
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Coughing.  
Photo By  
Chewy  
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# THE NEWS DESK

By: Bill Bingle

I received an E-mail this month, from a reader named Jeff over in Absecon, who asked: "...if you call yourself a critic then why is it you never have anything negative to say in any of the articles you write? A critic is supposed to be *critical*, you seem to have missed that point...the way you simply hand out compliments makes you a *sycophant*, do you know what that word means ...and so on and so forth.

Well, Jeff, while I am glad that you at least took the time to voice your opinion (which is more than most folks ever have the courage to do), you are way off base, champ, so let me clear up a few things for you. OK? OK!

First off, check the record I have had plenty of "negative" things to say about certain artists and groups. I just don't make a habit of trashing work done by others. Why? Because I happen to *not* consider myself a critic. Generally a critic's whole existence is based around his/her ability to wittily trash someone else's creative work. Usually, these people have little to no creativity within themselves (and they know it) so they tend to compensate by putting other's creative work down. I can't do that. I won't do that. I don't do that. If you don't like it...I'm sorry, but that's the way it is. Since I do know a thing or three about music since I've played for over ten years and collected for almost twenty, and since many folks I know seem to trust in my musical judgment, I can try to give you a feel for the work I review, which (admittedly) is usually a first impression. What I intend is to help *you* the consumer make a more informed choice when you walk into the record store with \$15.00 in your pocket. Hopefully I can direct your attentions toward music and artists who aren't being shoved down your throat by the mainstream press and, possibly, open up new musical avenues for you to explore. I'm lucky in that I get to pick and choose the music I review to a certain extent, and, since there is limited space in the magazine, I do tend to lean toward work that I'm impressed with or excited about. And why not? Why would I waste my time (and yours) dwelling on crap? If that makes me a sycophant in your eyes then that's a chance I'll have to take. Right? Thanks again for taking the interest. Remember all commentary is encouraged and considered: News Desk c/o IN TUNE Box 333 Northfield, NJ 08225 or e-mail through the web site @ [www.rockline.com/intune](http://www.rockline.com/intune). Now, you get the ankles I'll get the wrists, and we'll get down to this....

**LOCAL NEWS:** Our local free form radio station, Stockton's WLFR 91.7 FM, has finally joined the computer age by adding a web site. You can check out Lake Fred Radio at [LOKISTOCKTON.EDU/~WLFR](http://LOKISTOCKTON.EDU/~WLFR) \*Well, the long awaited new ATLANTIC CITY CONVENTION CENTER is finally completed. We can only hope and pray this means more concerts for the AC area. We'll keep ya posted!

**NATIONAL NEWS:** Wow, kids, lots doing in the music world! I guess one of the big stories right now is the breakup of one of the more talented bands to emerge from the Seattle hype of 1991-94, **SOUNDGARDEN**. While the split was termed "amicable" in their official statement, it comes as a shock to many considering the massive success of their last two albums. But therein lies the rub! Singer and multi-instrumentalist **CHRIS CORNELL** was quoted as saying "...we haven't had a summer off from each other in ten years!". This is most likely the healthiest possible move the band can make. Rather than repeat themselves, each of the members of Soundgarden has freed themselves up to pursue their various side projects. Cornell is said to have a massive backlog of demo'd songs and will cut a solo album, guitarist **KIM THAYILL** will most likely complete his Doctorate in Philosophy, bassist **BEN SHEPHERD** is said to be preparing to record with his band **DEVILHEAD** and, is preparing to release the second album by his project **HATER**. So, don't count them out just yet! After a while they may just reform and pull one helluva great album out of their asses once they get their ya-ya's out. Plus, in light of this split, **A&M** might steer some well needed attention toward Red Bank NJ's own **MONSTER MAGNET** who've just completed recording their latest album out in LA! \*Now, I ask ya, how friggin' long have you been waiting to see **BLACK SABBATH** reform with **OZZY**? Too damn long, right? Well it was about to happen thanks to the **OZZFEST '97**, a 14 band, all day headbanging bash with one stop scheduled at Giant's Stadium. Of course leave it to those oh-so-holier-than-thou Christian groups to ruin a good time. Thanks to some negative press generated by one of the fest's acts, **MARILYN MANSON**, including protests, cancelled gigs, and various suicides and murders perpetrated by that band's "fans" the New Jersey Sports And Exhibition Authority ordered Ozzy to remove Manson from the bill. When Ozzy refused the gig was cancelled (on the day tix were to go on sale no less) and a stalemate ensued. At the time of this writing the Oz has promised to take legal recourse and he's being backed by the **ACLU** as this does represent a violation of First Amendment Rights. And don't say I didn't warn ya! With politicians and religious groups successfully outlawing certain types of music in Merry Ol' England it's just a matter of time before it happens here. Now is the time to stand up to these

pressure groups before they try to control more important matters than a concert!!!! **Think and Act!!!** \*Speaking of all day music fests this summer will see no lack of such things. Along with the now traditional **LOLLAPALOOZA** and **H.O.R.D.E.** tours there are a spate of various gang tours roaming the landscape including the rap tour, the Dead redux **FURTHUR**, the **WARPED** punk/skate tour, the **LILITH** tour featuring all female artists, plus tours with concentrations on Christian and Electronic music. In addition to this there are massive stadium shows by dinosaurs like **AEROSMITH**, **THE ROLLING STONES**, and **U-2** to go along with the usual young acts. Basically, this means there will be no shortage of killer shows; start saving your spare change now!! \*Oh yeah, and speaking of militant Christian groups trying to control what choices you can make as far as music goes...check this one out. We know that aging popster/gospel-er **PAT BOONE** alternately turned heads/stomachs with his big band versions of classic metal tunes. But, in working with the likes of **ALICE COOPER** and **METALLICA** he found them to be real great people and he also worth in the music where he once denounced it as the work of "the devil". Problem is, in promoting the album he donned a leather outfit and shades as a little joke. But, many Christian groups and "fans" of his syndicated gospel radio program protested his recording of heavy metal and consequently got his show cancelled by Infinity Broadcasting (which was recently bought by Westinghouse International—there's a clue for ya). So, Pat...welcome to our world! It doesn't feel too good to get that 'ol time religion shoved up yer ass, does it? \*The **BEASTIE BOYS** have announced that the Second Annual **TEBETIAN FREEDOM CONCERT** set for early June will be an East Coast affair, happening at the New York area venue Randall's Island! \*Unfortunately there has been quite a few losses in the music world this year, none so heartbreaking as the death of drummer extraordinaire **TONY WILLIAMS** the onetime **MILES DAVIS** sideman whose band **LIFETIME** helped lay the foundation for modern jazz and fusion playing. Williams passed on Feb 23rd of a heart attack, he was 52. His most recent work, an album of improvisational jazz alongside bassist **BILL LASWELL** entitled "ARCANA" is due out this summer on the Subharmonic label. Also significantly gone is glam-rock stalwarts **SWEET**'s frontman **BRIAN CONNELLY**, also 52, who died of liver failure in Slough, England, and the formidable guitarist of **SPIRIT**, **RANDY CALIFORNIA**, who received his nickname from Jimi Hendrix in order for him to differentiate between him and a Randy from Texas, drowned off the coast of Hawaii earlier in the month. He will be missed by many, to be sure! \***KISS** will soon be immortalized once again in plastic. A new line of **KISS** dolls was unveiled at the International Toy Fair Convention. \*In San Francisco Grove Street has been turned into Sunset Strip as that city's "Walk Of Fame" has been instituted. First recipients of the honor include **CARLOS SANTANA** and (surprise, surprise) **JERRY GARCIA**. \*Finally, if you haven't tried it yet check out the new **BEN & JERRY'S** ice cream flavor **PHISH FOOD**. Not only is it the most fantastic thing you'll ever eat, but proceeds go to help the environmental clean up of the Lake Champlain region in upstate N.Y. Add that to the \$10,000 **PHISH** raised at a recent benefit concert in their homebase of Burlington, Vt. it equals some very happy real fish in those waterways. Very cool, indeed.

**MEA CULPA:** Well, shucks Bubba...last time I mentioned that the **HOWARD STERN PRIVATE PARTS SOUNDTRACK** CD would feature **TOOL**. Well, I was wrong on that one. At the time of the writing (late Jan.) the album was still being put together and on his show Howard had repeatedly said that he wanted to get Tool involved. Since Howard usually gets what he wants these days I included them on the list. In the end they weren't included. Sorry.

**RELEASES:** The biggest news this month is; albums, albums, albums!! This is the busy season for the music biz, and this month is one of the busiest I've seen in a while. And, if you're like me (and god help you if you are!) you have no idea where to begin as far as acquisitions. Well let's see if we can get some kind of handle on it...

Since summer, and festival season, is right around the corner all the major players are out in force. The dinosaurs are definitely roaming around this year with major releases from; **AEROSMITH** "Nine Lives", **QUEENSRYCHE** "Hear In The Now Frontier", **U-2** "Pop", **DAVID BOWIE** "Earthling", **KISS** "Greatest KISS", **VAN MORRISON** "The Healing Game", **(TALKING) HEADS** "No Talking, Just Heads", **ACE FREHLEY** "12 Picks", **NEIL YOUNG & CRAZY HORSE**, **THE ROLLING STONES**...the list just goes on, and on. Basically the advertising push for these albums will be jammed down yer throat so I won't dwell, although I will point out that there is a brand new album on the shelves now from venerable **PINK FLOYD** keyboardist **RICK WRIGHT**, although with his past record as far as solo albums go I say proceed at your own risk. Also **SAMMY HAGAR** has beaten his former band mates to the punch. While they are out posing for milk ads, Sammy has been at it recording his new "supergroup" album "**MARCHING TO MARS**" which is heavily blues laden features the work of; **HUEY LEWIS**, **SLASH**, and **GRATEFUL DEAD** percussionist **MICKY**



**HEART. VAN HALEN** has their work cut out for 'em, especially amid the rumors that their latest singer (yeah, that guy from Extreme) is said to have been fired and/or quit. I think it's time to hang it up and rest that hip replacement Eddie! \***G.LOVE** has a new bass player filling the shoes of **JIMMY "JAZZ"** **PRESCOTT** switching the rhythm section of **SPECIAL SAUCE** to a more electric and rock type of feel. Their album is due out in June. **BLUES TRAVELER** are also putting the finishing touches on their latest, but instead of touring with the **H.O.R.D.E.** they will spend the summer in Europe. Joining the **H.O.R.D.E.** though is **PRIMUS** whose first album since the departure of "**HERB**" is due out just prior to the first tour date and features former **LIMBOMANIACS/PRAXIS** drummer **BRAIN**. **MORPHINE** turned down a main stage spot on the **H.O.R.D.E.** to take the headlining slot on the second stage, and judging by the excellent work on their new on "**Like Swimming**" it will be a crunch fest at every stop. Also sporting new albums under their belt are **H.O.R.D.E.**'s **BIG HEAD TODD** and **THE MONSTERS** whose "**Beautiful World**" boasts a cameo from **JOHN LEE HOOKER** as well as Talking Head **JERRY HARRISON** who handled production. \*A brand new album from **JIMI HENDRIX** is due out around now. This may seem like a flogging of the dead horse, especially since most of the material is already available on such records as "**The Rainbow Bridge Soundtrack**", but consider this; "**NEW RISING SUN**" is the first album release since Jimi's dad Al won his long suit against MCA who have ripped him off for years, plus the remix and remastered versions of "**Night Bird Flying**" and "**Belly Button Window**" are gonna sound sooooo phat! Get it! \*look for the new Blue Note release from **THE CHARLIE HUNTER QUARTET** a collection of jazz remakes of some of the most well known reggae tunes by **BOB MARLEY** and **PETER TOSH** \*The originators of the "goof-rock" genre **M.I.R.V.** are going from underground to really, really, really, underground. They've left **THE PRAWN SONG** label and have released "**FEEDING TIME ON MONKEY ISLAND**" a whacked collection of songs that combine; metal, fusion, surf and (no kidding) opera. Unfortunately, this CD is only available (if you live outside the San Francisco area) by mail from **POISON EYE 6331 Fairmount Ave, #372 El Cerrito Calif. 94530**. Trust me on this-if you ever put out this kind of effort to buy a CD, this is the one to get!!!! \*They might be prolific...**THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS** have summed up their past life with the release of "**THEN: THE EARLIER YEARS**" a retrospective of 72 cuts including 15 unreleased tracks. \***THE MONKEES** are back for one more round on their 30th anniversary. Not only are the old TV shows being played over **VH-1** but they have a new album "**JUSTUS**" on which the Monkees play and write all the music (uh, yeah, right...) and **MIKE NESMITH** makes his songwriting and performing return! \*Former **MINUTEMEN** bassist **MIKE WATT** has been quite a busy puppy. Between touring with Porno For Pyros he's been hard at it recording a new **DOS** record with former **BLACK FLAG** bassist **KIRA**, plus recording an upright bass quartet **THE BULLFIDDLES**, a new solo record which will mark a return to the trio format and feature guitarist **NELS CLINE**. In addition to that check out **BANYAN** an improvised, free form exploration featuring Watt with drummer **STEPHEN PERKINS** and produced by the **DUST BROTHERS**. \*Another active ex-Black Flagger is **HENRY ROLLINS** who released a spoken word album earlier this year entitled "**EYE SCREAM**" and has returned to recording with his band on "**COME IN AND BURN**" which is their strongest effort since "End Of Silence"! \*Speaking of speaking, look for the new Ryko release of "**KEROUAC-KICKS JOY DARKNESS**" which brings together artists as diverse as; **MORPHINE**, **HOVERCRAFT**, **STEVEN TYLER**, and **MAGGIE ESTEP**, and others for spoken and music performances. Also featured are recordings from Kerouac buddies **LAWRENCE FERLINGETTI** and the late **ALLEN GINSBERG**. Also, "**FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS**", the seminal Gonzo journalism work by the great **HUNTER S. THOMPSON** has been dramatized in celebration of it's 25th anniv. Also, Rykodisc has released all of the recorded works by the incredibly funny and controversial comedian, the late **BILL HICKS**. (see our web site for complete reviews of both of these!)\*Remix albums seem to be the rage these days, everyone wants another single to push. But, strangely enough, **MEDESKI, MARTIN, & WOOD** have jumped into this trend with the "**BUBBLEHOUSE**" remix CD5 with an unreleased "Shack Man" session track plus remixes by **WE** and **Vernon Ried** collaborator **DJ LOGIC** featuring sax work by **JOHN ZORN** \*Apart from remixes it's apparent to anyone who has half a brain that the Electronica onslaught we are in the middle of won't be subsiding too soon, if you are getting a bit interested compilation discs are a good source for dipping your toes into the waters and **INSTINCT** records may have your ticket. Check out; "**HIGH PERFORMANCE**" for a range of danceable techno, "**PLUG IN & TURN ON x.4**" for a seriously phat group of Trip-Hop and Acid Jazz cuts. If you are a touch more adventurous and want to just jump right in **THE ORB's** latest "**ORBLIVION**" is a perfect starting point, always follow the master's lead, right? **THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS** latest full length "**DIG YOUR OWN HOLE**" is strong for those looking for a funkier groove, while **ASTRALASIA** "**SEVEN POINTED STAR**" is good for a heavy techno vibe. If you are still a bit squeamish about purely electronic sounds you might go with **TRANQUILITY BASS** "**LET THE FREAK FLAG FLY**" a funky amalgam that fuses Psychedelia, Funk, Techno, Trip-Hop, and uses, mostly, live instruments. Lingering at the half

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Friday	JUNE	20	Imaginary Friends
Saturday	JUNE	21	Love Monkey
Friday	JUNE	27	Red House
Saturday	JUNE	28	Sadie Love
Friday	JULY	4	Shades of Grey
Saturday	JULY	5	Road House
Friday	JULY	11	Jimmy King Blues Band
Saturday	JULY	12	Mostly White Meat
Friday	JULY	18	Suspended Sentence
Saturday	JULY	19	East
Friday	JULY	25	Bumpin Uglier
Saturday	JULY	26	Depressed Poets

way point are a pair of fine albums released by MCA (who are going to get the jump on this music upheaval after dropping the ball with Alternative) **TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND** "**PSYCHIC KARAOKE**" and the spin-off album from it's lead singer (and **JAH WOBBLE** collaborator) **NATACHA ATLAS** "**DIASPORA**" make use of near and far eastern instruments and themes, blending vocals and beats with a wall of sounds. Just excellent! \*Some good news and bad news for fans of Progressive/Psychedelic music...bad news first, eh? It looks like **GRIFFIN RECORDS**, who distribute **HAWKWIND'S** music, is filing for bankruptcy. All their product has been confiscated and sits on the shelves, so...if you have any Griffin releases in your collection hang on to 'em they are now collectable. The good news is **CLEOPATRA RECORDS** has added a third division to their family. **PURPLE PYRAMID RECORDS** kicks off with a pair of strong Kraut-rock releases; **BRAINTICKET** "**Celestial Ocean**" is a re-issue of the 1968 space classic while **CLUSTER** "**USA Live**" is a double disc collection of the best cuts from that band's first ever tour of the U.S. \*Rykodisc continues its **FRANK ZAPPA** reissue strategy with "**HAVE I OFFENDED SOMEBODY?**" a collection of songs featuring his most non-PC satirical lyrics including; "Jewish Princess", "Bobby Brown Goes Down", "Valley Girl", and "Catholic Girls". Sure, you're saying "But I have all of those on the original albums." Well, the marketing boys have figured out a way to get your money anyhow. This album features two previously unreleased live tracks "Tinsel Town Rebellion" and "Dumb All Over" plus alternate mixes of the others. Suffer on, fan boy! \*Oh my God, Oh my God, Oh his God...there is no God if **PAVEMENT** can gain critical acclaim for their latest piece of shit album. They should out and out be embarrassed to put their names on that crap. It's funny though, they used to write songs that made fun of people like themselves. Ah, they are my favorite hypocrites! \*Finally, the kind heated, yet totally evil folks at **ENERGY RECORDS** have sent along a pile of new releases which range from the heavy metalish **SPEEDBALL** "**DRIVE LIKE HELL**", and **FUELED** "**IN THE HOUSE OF THE ENEMY**" to San Francisco Gothic **SUNSHINE BLIND** "**LIQUID**" to the heavy side of the Industrial/Electronica fray with **HANZEL UND GRETYL** "**TRANSMISSIONS FROM URANUS**" and a new **BILE** EP. And, as always, there are more and more, check our web page for the list. **WRAPUP:** Okay, there you go...for now. I had thought up the most killer "remember" a few weeks ago for this month's column, but I forgot to write it down. Oooops! So, let's go this route...remember: Always have a pen and paper handy, you'll never know when inspiration will strike!



## IF YOU WANT REAL INSPIRATION, YOU GOTTA DIG DEEPER

I thought that, instead of the usual complaining, bitching, grouching and venting, it would be a useful idea to perhaps contribute something in the way of positive suggestions to those plying the trade or otherwise who are involved or interested in the local scene, such as it is. It occurred to me that artists are influenced by other artists. All of us at some point have been influenced by certain players on certain albums. Unfortunately, there is a questionable lot available at any given point in time, but, if we look back over the long haul, there are a great number of recordings that one could listen to and learn something valuable from. Even then, many of these recordings are obscure. Nonetheless, they are worth getting hold of, because they are a great untapped source of musical excellence. What I thought I would do is give you a few of these that have drifted into my collection and that have proven invaluable as long term sources and examples to follow.

Number one on this list is a 1983 recording by the **Michael Stanley Band** called *You Can't Fight Fashion*. Any band bold enough to buck the current trend of "bad-psychedelia-meets-white-bread-funk" and who really, *really* wants to break some ground in terms of *music* should digest this album by one of the Midwest's great heartland rock bands. "High Life," and "Hard Times" are two tunes that are about as insistent as rock music ever gets, while "My Town" is great for lyrical mileage no matter what town they play it in. "Fire In The Hole" with it's double sixteenth note snare hits and tight punch details a mining disaster in the lingo of those that do the dirty work. Listen to this one a lot. Learn it. Learn how it's done.

The year 1970 produced two more valuable but somewhat overlooked recordings. The first is *Steppenwolf 7*. Recorded, of course, by *Steppenwolf*, this album is still as muscular as *anything* recorded since. There are two reasons for this. (1) Richard Podolor and Bill Cooper knew how to record without resorting to the questionable or the trendy. Thus what gets through is the sound of a tough little band. (2) The band itself knew how to write and arrange for both mood and impact. Not much for the normal fare, John Kay sings about his experience of escaping from then-Communist East Germany in "Renegade," of the demise of a friend who succumbs to a cocaine habit on Hoyt Axton's "Snow Blind Friend" and gives a "don't-let-the-door-hit-you-in-the-ass" send off to someone who makes unreasonable demands on "Who Needs Ya?" There's a lot here, what with Larry Byrom's tough stripped down guitar, juxtaposed against Goldy McJohn's thick Hammond B3 and Jerry Edmonton's rock solid drumming.

The second 1970 gem is by that old war-horse **Iron Butterfly** entitled *Metamorphosis*. Somewhat unjustly maligned for the overhyped and dated "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" (1967/8), this album was recorded three years later with

different personnel and a completely different sound. Doug Ingle's chintzy Vox surf-music organ got traded in for a Hammond, and Erik Brann's psychedelic guitar is gone in favor of the bluesy axe of Mike Pinera ("Ride Captain Ride") and that of former Allman Brothers cohort Larry Rinehart, known here as "El Rhino." These two players alone are worth the price of admission. The approach is similar to that of the Allmans in the harmony lead guitar department, but rhythmically, the band is far "chunkier" or "angular" than Southern rock would allow. Easily as riff-laden as early Led Zeppelin, most of the songs on this disc are more intelligently constructed than Zep's performance oriented repertoire would comfortably contain. From the straight-ahead "New Day" to the oddly timed funk of "Best Years Of Our Lives" to the intensity of "Easy Rider", this recording is an unqualified masterpiece.

Next time, I'll share a few more of these undiscovered or overlooked treasures with the intent to get you to listen to something more than the flavor of the month, perhaps even discovering musical pathways that have been cut but left unexplored by subsequent players. All I'm telling you now is to hunt down these discs (they're all available on CD reissues) and do a bit of serious listening. Go ahead. Dig deeper. It doesn't hurt.

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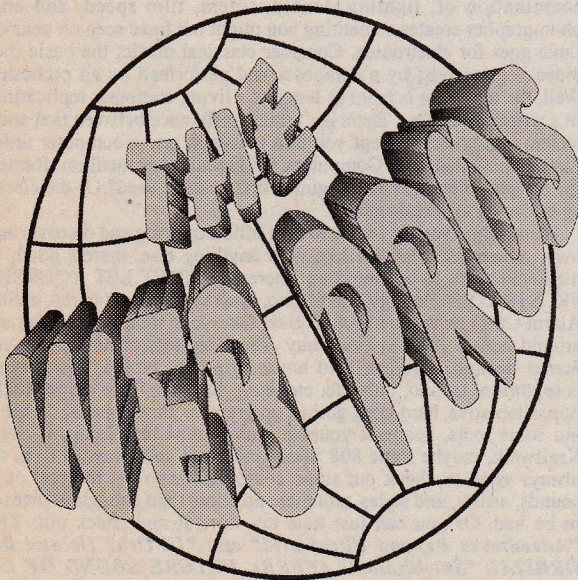
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# ELECTRONICA '97

By: Bill Bengele

(NOTE: If you can identify any of the following terms you may not need to read this and can turn the page now: bpm's, chill out room, PWEL, sine waves, jungle, frrr, Dr. Alex Patterson, FSOL, bass+drums, trip-hop, 808, loops, dub...)

*"What rough beast staggers toward Bethlehem to be born?"—Joyce*

Well now, it's been a few years gone, so what's become of the latest savior of Rock & Roll, the "Alternative Revolution"? It's over, Johnny! We had a great run, but like all things—this too shall pass. Those rebellious twenty-somethings are swiftly becoming much more sheepish thirty-somethings, and the industry's marketing boys are already turning their backs on "Generation X" in order to get a fresh start with this "Generation Next" (and if you thought we were pissed-off just wait till they find their collective voice!). The feeding frenzy is all but done. MTV's washed its hands of Alternative. With record sales dropping over 2% last year, even the suits in charge of the whole mess are getting antsy. Sure, 2% doesn't sound like much of a drop but in a 20 billion dollar a year industry it really is a sizeable chunk of cash, and the suits don't like it. Too many bands got signed because they fit the sound, rather than possessing actual substance, and nobody wants to hear that crap anymore. It's not that there weren't winners in the televised music revolution. Bands like: Jane's Addiction, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Alice In Chains, Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Stone Temple Pilots, have already established themselves as the vanguard of Classic Rock to come, complete with a smack pedigree to rival their elders. Meanwhile, Hip-hop reached all the highs it had struggled to earn, reaching well into the hearts (and wallets) of White America, before lynching itself with a rope of its own goddamned creation.

The losers, those who haven't found their niche market, are now scrambling madly to replace their retread Sabbath licks for retread Beatles licks in a vain attempt to, at least, reach some kind of one-hit-wonder status—another sad and forgotten footnote in the annals of rock history, a Trivial Pursuit question that we will have on the tips of our tongues, but won't quite be able to remember. Right now these doomed suckers are poised to drop off the face of the Earth just like all those way too cheesy '80's pop-metal bands did between '90-'92. And, right on cue, the industry types and critics are now frantically searching for the "Next Big Thing"! But where can it be found? Is college radio the answer? Nope. College radio ceased to be a force of reckoning at the same time Pearl Jam became media darlings, and is every bit as much a part of the huge, lumbering music industry establishment as independent films are part of the studio system. It's irrelevant, or at least not the force it once was, that much is for sure. At one point it looked like "lo-fi" and "indie" pop-rock might be the way the compass is pointing. The problem there is simple—it sucks! There is no art in an untuned guitar and piss poor, soulless vocals. But, any schmuck with a few thousand dollars can (and will) press a 7" record. The rest of 'em sold out their romantic ideals of anti-corporate independence once the offers came filtering down and they quickly became exactly what they hated—rock and roll bands. Now the latest vogue on college campus is looking backward. Roots music; folk, bluegrass, blues, country, and bands that rip these forms off wholesale have captured the imagination of those students who aren't vainly holding onto Alternative. Everybody wants to honky-tonk. Sure, there is an undoubtable historical importance there, but it's still nostalgia. Son House, Robert Johnson, Hoyt Axton, Bill Monroe, they're all great—but hardly the stuff to excite the masses. No, the "Next Big Thing" will have to be exciting, dynamic, and capable of stretching across the musical spectrum; from subtle musical genius, to banal musical sensationalism. It will have to have a history, legs to stand on. It will have to move people, excite them and unite them. It will have to play a central part in an entire youth movement, wielding influence over style and fashion. Most of all, it will have to be a whole lotta fun.

Actually, the "Next Big Thing" is already with us. It has been for quite a long while, and it is already big, big, big. Don't think so? Well, just who do you think that Flock Of Seagulls lookin' mother f\*\*ker is that's on your MTV yelling about "I am the firestarter!"? And why do you think Kurt Loder looks particularly self satisfied as he tells you when he will tour the U.S.? Because Prodigy is the hottest new act to crowbar its way into the mainstream consciousness and behind them are literally hundreds of acts who will soon storm our shores like conquering barbarians bringing with them their supercharged version of a music style that was born, and consequently

ignored, right here in the U.S. in places like Detroit and Chicago and the Bronx (sound familiar? think the blues, baby!).

And Kurt knows it.

I am, of course, talking about the whole techno-electro-industrial genre here. All indicators would point to that as the "Next Big Thing", ready to slip effortlessly into the vacuum left in the wake of a bloated and untended Rock & Roll Garden Of Eden. Typically, Americans are the last to catch this bus, but we'll eventually compensate for that by taking it way too far, way too fast. But I digress...we'll save that for later.

Don't get me wrong, here. I'm *not* trying to say electronic music will ever replace Rock. Nothing will ever replace it. How could it? Rock music will always be with us. As long as there are fifteen year old kids who can't get laid, there will be a need for loud guitars. But right now Rock just ain't cutting the mustard and it's time for something a little different to capture the public's eye; just like Folk did in the early '60's, just like Disco in the late '70's, just like synth-pop in the mid '80's.

Impossible you say? Electro isn't all that, you say? Well shucks, Bubba, take a look around you. You're surrounded. It's in the clubs. It's on radio and TV commercials for god's sake! Hell, you've probably been listening to electro for a while now...Nine Inch Nails ring a bell? Ministry? Front 242? Bjork? You'd probably be very surprised at all the electronic trickery that goes into making your favorite Rock albums. In fact, right now Rock & Roll is already perpetrating it's unique form of cultural thuggery by assimilating a few elements of what's new and hot (all in the name of *experimentation* don't ya know), then tossing it back to it's own audience as if they'd invented it—just like it did to hip-hop starting with the Run-DMC/Aerosmith version of "Walk This Way". Just take a listen to the newest U-2 or David Bowie discs to see what I mean. Or Danzig, or David Byrne, or...

Am I saying you should buy into the latest fad with abandon? Hells no! What I'm saying is this; don't just wave your hand and discount this music because the little bits and pieces you've been exposed to didn't appeal to you. That's about as silly as saying that a band like King Crimson or Rush sucks because they are Rock music, and since you've heard the Beatles' "Love Me Do" you know that all Rock music sucks. There must be something to the art form if great players like Robert Fripp, Steve Hillage, Brian Eno, David Byrne, The Edge & Larry Mullen, Simon Phillips, Guy Pratt, Jah Wobble, Bill Laswell, and many others are willing to get themselves *seriously* involved in it.

The other big argument against electronic music that I hear all the time is about Sampling. Sampling and computer generated music has gotten a real bad rap because of some really, really poor applications of the technology, people ripping off songs and riffs wholesale etc. They'll say it's not really music, not really art, because it's *not created* by that person. Well, look at it this way; you wouldn't say Ansel Adams isn't an artist because he didn't create the, let's say, tree or mountain he photographed. But, by using a combination of; lighting, lenses, filters, film speed, and angles the photographer creates something you might not have seen on your own. The same goes for electronica. Consider classical music; the basic theme of a piece is conceived by a composer and performed by an orchestra, right? Well, the orchestra is more or less just a living computer replicating sounds in a written out order. There isn't much difference between that and the best techno composers, except you don't have to pay a computer union scale. Zappa knew that one! Computers are just another medium. Remember all the hoopla when the electric guitar first became used? Or the electric bass, or the moog synthesizer, or....

If and when you do decide to do a little exploring and discovering of your own, remember this: just like with anything else, there's good, bad, and mediocre work to be found out there so, DON'T LET YOURSELF GET FRUSTRATED! Prodigy is to techno, what Vanilla Ice is to rap, or Strawberry Alarm Clock is to acid rock. Relax, take your time with it, ask and listen around before you buy, buy, buy. There are lots of new terms you'll run across (techno, ambient, acid house, trip-hop, jungle, bass+drums, hard-core, torture techno, dub, etc. etc. etc.) just like there are in Rock (metal, pop, alternative, hard-core, gothic, progressive, thrash, punk, etc.etc.). Check out some roots, acquaint yourself with groups like Tangerine Dream and Kraftwerk, maybe some 808 State, and work your way up from there. It's always good to check out some compilations to get the feel of different sounds, artists, and styles, and there are more than enough of them out there to be had. Or you can just take my word it and check out: *THE ORB "Adventures Beyond Ultraworld"* and *"UFOrb" (Island Records)*, *ORBITAL "Snivilization" (FFRR)*, *FUTURE SOUND OF LONDON "Lifeforms"*, *SYSTEM 7 "Power Of Seven" (Hypnotic)*, *EAT STATIC "Abduction"* and *"Implant" (Planet Dog/Mammoth Records)*, *TIMESHARD "Hunab Ku"*, *"Crystal Oscillations" (Planet Dog/Mammoth Records)*, *MOBY "Everything Is Wrong" (Elektra)*, *KRAFTWERK "Trans-Europe Express" (Capitol)*, *"The Mix" (Elektra)*, *APHEX TWIN "Selected Ambient Works Vol 2" (Sire/WB)*, *POLYGON WINDOW "Surfing On Sine Waves" (Warp/TVT)*, *PSYCHIC TV "Hex Sex"*, *"Allegory and Self" (Cleopatra)*, *COMPILATIONS: "Trance Europe Express #2" (Volume)*, *"Artificial Intelligence vols. 1 & 2" (Warp/TVT)*, *"One-Three A.D." (Waveform)*, *"California Dreaming" (FFRR)*.



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# HOME AT LAST: Perfectly GOOD Cigar

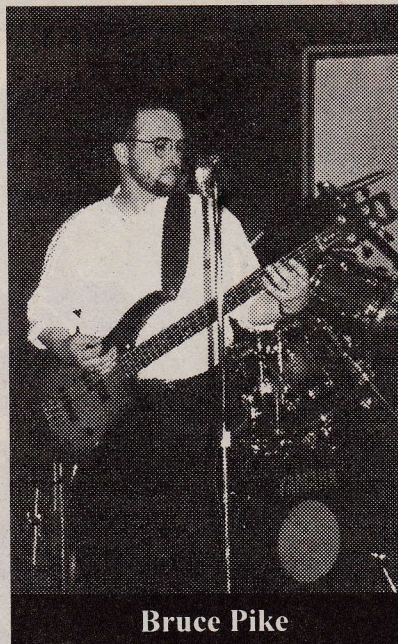
By Raquel Poole



**Ernie Trionfo**

If you were part of the crowded house over at Rumors Rib Room on March 22, then reading this will probably be a happy reminder of an awesome night. However, if you were unable to make the CD release party of HOME AT LAST's new CD, Perfectly Good Cigar, then run right out and buy it because this is something you've got to hear. The well-seasoned

sound of Home at Last was on the menu at Rumors Rib Room in Richland on that wonderful night, and boy was it worth the trip! They opened up the evening with Where's The Party?, a happy Latin sound that backs up a comically cynical lyric line. Performed acoustically, like three others that night, Party, opened with the amazingly complex rhythms of drummer Charlie "the drum god" Andaloro setting the tone for the entire evening. He was quickly joined by Bruce Pike, bassist and lead singer who, besides providing the bass line that grooves for eternity, sings with such emphasis that you cannot take your eyes or ears off of him. Why anyone would want to do that with the "dynamic duo" on guitars is beyond me. Lead guitarist Ernie Trionfo, who's got way more tasty licks than a tootsie pop, is one of the finest guitar players in South

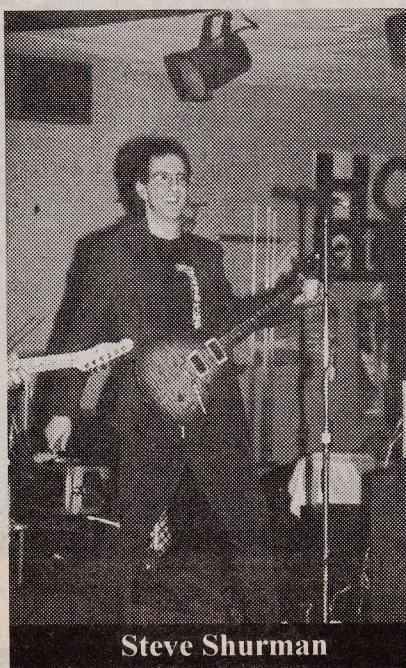


**Bruce Pike**

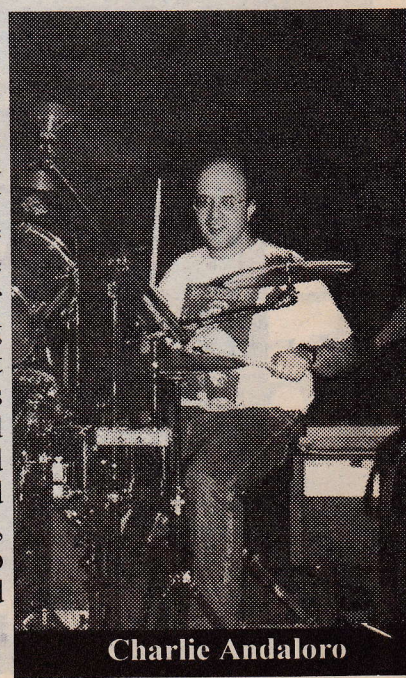
Jersey. He also sings lead vocals on one of the songs off the new CD and backing vocals on many others and what a soulful voice! Steve Shurman adds the final touch to this powerhouse of a group with his co-lead and rhythm guitar work. Steve's choice of notes would make Eric Clapton turn his head, not to

mention that he plays one hell of a slide guitar.

The first set that night, was comprised of 10 songs, most of which were, of course off of the new CD. In my opinion, that first set was probably the best and most electrically charged live performance I have ever seen or heard. After the first 4 acoustic songs the band started on their electric set. You might have thought that somebody had thrown on the "extra magic" switch because I don't think there was one person present who didn't get Goosebumps. The band takes their ultimately original sound and makes, here's something really rare folks, fantastic music that is truly unforgettable. The funky grooves, the weaving guitar lines, the driving bass and the almost too perfect vocals make this band worth seeing and hearing again and again and... Oh, what the hell just go buy the CD and you'll understand.



**Steve Shurman**



**Charlie Andaloro**



# LIVE

The Stone Pony  
Asbury Park, N.J.

2/11/97

By: Chewy

When the York, Pa. band consisting of **Ed Kowalczyk** (Vocals), **Chad Taylor** (Guitar), **Patrick Dahlheimer** (Bass) and **Chad Gracey** (Drums) announced that they were making their second stop on their **Secret Samadhi** world tour at little o' Asbury Park, N.J. it immediately sold out to the rafters. Though the album was not yet released, fans were eager to see the band live again after nearly a two year sabbatical from the area. With a track record like theirs, which included their first record, **Mental Jewelry** going gold and their sophomore release, **Throwing Copper** going platinum six times over, it was a sure bet that the new album and tour was going to please.

The band took to the stage ready and willing to play in support of their new release. Starting off the show with "Unsheathed" the crowd was very receptive for not having heard the tune before. The moshing and surfing commenced as the band rolled along with "Ghost" and "Freaks" before slowing up the pace with the moving ballad, "Turn My Head." They continued on with the new material in the form of the hard rocking "Heropsychodreamer" to everyone's delight.

After thanking the audience for their patience with the new material, the band pulled out "Iris" from **Throwing Copper**, one of the few older tunes they would play in the set. Then it was back on track with "Century" and "Rattlesnake" before again returning to the past with "Waitress." Next up and a surprise to all was a brilliant cover of the **Psychedelic Furs'** "Love My Way." Finishing up the hour long set was "Graze," the well known single "Lakini's Juice" and finally the epic "Gas Hed Goes West." After a brief break **Live** returned to the stage with another **Throwing Copper** cut, "Lightning Crashes" which incited a sing-along from the sweaty crowd. The enthusiasm was kept up for the last song of the night, the ever popular "I Alone."

Though the lack of older material might have been disappointing to a few, it seemed that the majority of the crowd was pleased with the show. After all, it's always special when a band treats it's fans to fresh material before it's released to the public. From what was played, it seems that **Live** has yet another hit on it's hands. The songs on **Secret Samadhi** show a definite maturity in the group, but that can only be expected from a band that is collectively in their mid-20s and already on their third album.

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FRI.	JUN	20	- Mo's Better Blues
SAT.	JUN	21	- Pocket Change
FRI.	JUN	27	- Floyd Hunter Band
SAT.	JUN	28	- Mark Stinger & the Swarm
FRI.	JUL	4	- Danny Eyer Band
SAT.	JUL	5	- June & The Hitmen
FRI.	JUL	11	- Blues Night Out
SAT.	JUL	12	- Blues Affair
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SAT.	JUL	19	- Rick Nollet
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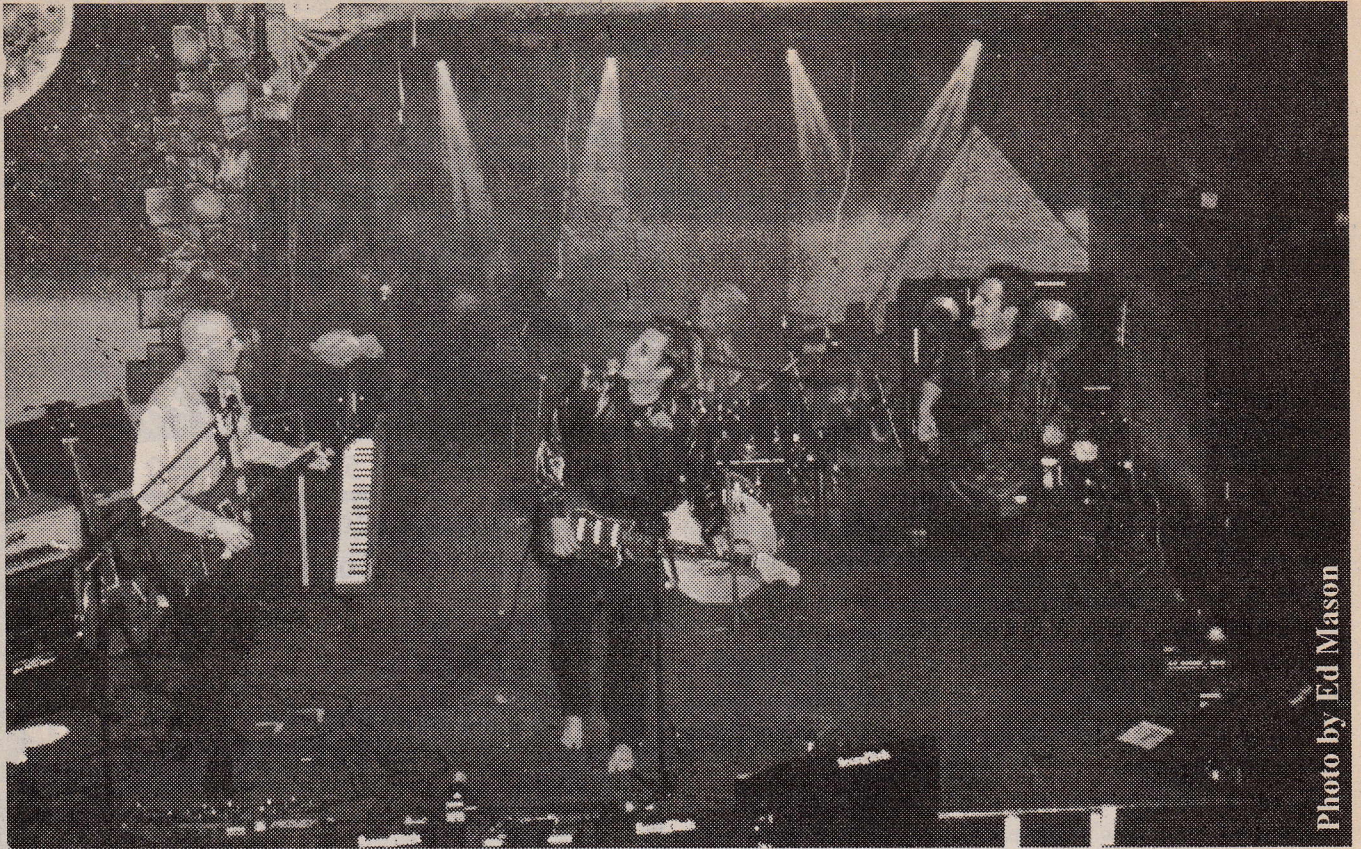


Photo by Ed Mason

# Eleven Eleven: Introducing Media

by Gina Mason

It was an evening to remember at the Middle East in Philly when Eleven Eleven introduced their second album, *Media* to the public. It was quite a crowd of new and old fans alike. Although two other bands performed (Vitamin "F" and Moonseed), it appeared as though the majority came to see Eleven Eleven...what a night it was!

Vitamin "F" got everyone all riled up with a fusion of rock, funk, jazz, blues and pop, a set of their own originals. Although I was not fortunate to see the entire set, what I did see I liked! In fact, I would have to comment that I will catch them again!

Next up, the long awaited debut of *Media*! What an event...popcorn, balloons and lots of eager spectators waiting in anticipation....then, Eleven Eleven took the stage with a spectacular array of lights, smoke and the music to complement it all! With Jeff Giuliani, (barefooted and all), at the helm, this 4-piece phenomenon took us through a night of excellent music.

Starting off with a song off of their first album, (From Red to Violet), entitled "Violet," all knew it was going to be an awesome night. They continued on with a blend of tunes from both albums, along with their title track "Media," which had a carnival like beginning to introduce itself.

Throughout the set, Jeff fingered his keyboard masterfully, while Steve McQuaid laid down some incredible licks on his guitar and to make the blend complete, Al DeNovellis' bass and drummer Rich Franchetta's sticks intensified the mood to

a higher level. Even the harmonies were the best I've ever seen of this foursome....WOW! Flowing from song to song...these boys worked the stage, while their fans gleamed blissfully looking forward to the next tune.

Lyricaly, writers Jeff Giuliani and Steve McQuaid seem to tug intensely within the realms of all emotions, making an awesome array of feelings with music to enhance the mood. The CD in itself is a worthwhile investment for great listening pleasure...the show, a whole lot more gratifying! To see these guys LIVE is a royal treat that I, for one do quite often! Don't take my word for it...check them out, buy the CD, then you will know!

All in all, the CD Release Party was a complete success! Although I could have had more, they did end with an encore, an In Tune favorite, "Song Three"...thanks guys!!

Finishing up for the night was Moonseed with a much heavier style. For those who hung around to the wee hours of morn got a third chance to be revitalized. Vince White, drummer extra-ordinaire made sure of that with his slamming techniques that totally amazed even me. This band made their presence known with wake me up vocals provided by Mario Binas, a little funk from bassist Greg McGearry and to top it all off, guitarist Doug Taylor added in his some mighty spicy riffs.

After the show, I could still hear the music...what great music...what great talent...what a great show!!!



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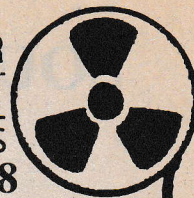
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# SOUL COUGHING

WITH:  
FIREWATER  
AT:  
THE STONE PONY  
ASBURY PARK, NJ  
3/11/97

By Bill Bengle

You know, being the last one to arrive at the party is a real friggin' drag. I mean OK., sure, so there is a real elitist thrill to being a part of a small group of fans who can say "I knew about [such and such band] before anyone." And then there are those people out there who will latch on to any bunch of talentless screwbags because no one knows about them (duh-there's a reason for that, Johnny!) for the same reason. Still, there comes a time to acknowledge that this kind of elitism is wrong, and usually, for me, that time is when I realize I'm the last to know! At least that was how I was feeling while sitting at the bar in the Stone Pony waiting for Soul Coughing to take the stage.

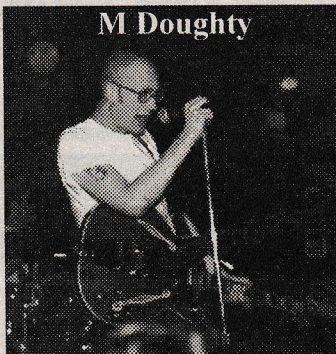
Since late 1992, when Knitting Factory doorman and NYU poet/musician/wannabe M. Doughty bent over backwards to form this groove-jazz-poetry-pop-dance-rock-hiphop thing, Soul Coughing has worked up a rep for being one of the tightest and most exciting bands on the New York underground scene. Their first release, "Ruby Vroom", got lost in the Alternative shuffle, garnering little attention except for those lucky few "in the know" who quickly became hard-core followers of the band. Now riding high(er) on the perplexing MTV/Modern-Rock radio success of the song "Super Bon-Bon", which could well become the summertime party anthem (under the right circumstances), it looks like this genre melting collective is about to bring some serious musicality, and Big City cool, to a whole new circle of friends.

Some of my anti-elitism fears were quelled as the opening band, Firewater, took to the Pony's venerable stage—I didn't have to fight for space among the gathering crowd or deal with sidelong, accusing glances from too-cool hipsters intent on keeping their private kaffee klatch their own. In fact, as Firewater won over those in attendance with their Klezmer laced songs of heartbreak and redemption, some nearly over zealous Soul Coughing fans were happily chattering about their excitement, recounting past SC shows (including their swing through Asbury in the fall), and voicing approval of Firewater's set. I almost forgot I was in New Jersey, for chrissakes! By the end of their set I'd concluded that Firewater's dark and moody songwriting could easily have come from any number of early 80's "college"

M'Ark De Gli Antoni



M Doughty



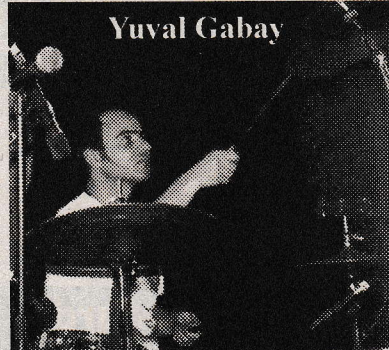
bands—the type who made IRS Records what it was—and I'd also worked up a good deal of anticipation for Soul Coughing.

SC's set began with "Unmarked Helicopters" an echoey, swirling, and sinister piece of psychedelia, a track they'd contributed to the X-Files soundtrack "*Songs In The Key Of X*", in total antithesis to the set that would follow. But, once cranked up, drummer Yuval Gabay and Upright Bassist Sebastian Steinberg (onetime Marc Ribot sideman) propelled the band through a slammin' set evenly focused on

songs from both their debut release and their latest. The crowd, which had grown in size by this time, remained rapt and respectful, the dancing, thankfully, didn't elevate into a moronic slam fest—another big plus. While the pregame buzz seemed unanimous in the predicable conclusion that "Ruby Vroom" is the better album than the more musically subtle and groove conscious "Irresistible Bliss", the same old story—the first album introduces one sound, the second either expounds on it or recreates it to the chagrin or delight of the listener. Luckily SC took the former road. Still, the stage arrangements of all the songs tweaked and twisted each tune into a noticeably altered direction showcasing the rhythm section's deep jazz roots and allowing Mark De Gli the opportunity to whip around the data bank of his sampling keyboard improvising with the various sound bits and noises in real time.

Musically this band is built on equal collaboration, but live their showpiece is still Doughty. While his guitar playing is forgettable (he's an admitted musical illiterate) he tends to forget to play sometimes, preferring to wrap himself up in expounding his lyrics which, by comparison to the mono-conceptual rhyme schemes (emphasize *scheme*) of a Biggie Smalls, Tupac, or Busta Rhymes, are poetry in every good sense of the term. Using the music as the canvas, words are images, colors Doughty lifts from his palette to paint a picture as complex as a summer afternoon in the city. William Carlos

Yuval Gabay



Williams on a head full of acid with the ability to improvise rhythm with a local, i.e.: the sudden shift from chunky funk to full-on bebop at the end of "Bus To Teelzebub". In between songs he chats playfully with the crowd whom he holds on the same level as himself, possessing the same knack for visceral human contact as (dare I say it?) Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, only instead of the guise of an old, black bluesman he wears the role of an impudent '90's, Gen-X, "post-ironic mutha-f\*cka". This might have backfired slightly as it prompted more than a few screams of "Liar! Liar!" from audience members during the quiet "True Dreams Of Wichita", getting Doughty's goat a little.

Following a rather odd rendition of "Super Bon Bon" and an improvised encore, exhausted but satisfied I find that the night was not the expected sell out. The curse of a school night? Maybe. I think I may have just become part of an exclusive club.

Uh-oh. Five percent nation of Asbury Park.

Sebastian Steinberg



Photos by Chewy



# TOOL

with: **THE MELVINS** and **BLUE TIP**

By Bill Bengle

All I can say is, Convention Hall in Asbury (and the adjacent Paramount Theatre) is a really fine, fine venue. This venerable room is acoustically sound, small enough to give off a very intimate vibe, yet still just large enough to allow for a grand spectacle. It's a benefit to all music lovers that it has been reopened, and an even better thing that my inaugural concert there turned out to be this one.

I attended, the opening band, Blue Tip, was everything you might expect from a young band signed to the Dischord label in the late 90's. While technically competent in the standard punk motif, they eventually drove those watching to distraction with their almost-but-not-quite-like-Fugazi attempts. Eventually (and thankfully) The Melvins took up the baton and began to warm the pensive crowd. Hidden behind his "Sideshow Bob" haircut King Buzzo ripped through the opening riff of Pink Floyd's "Interstellar Overdrive". Maybe it was the Floyd but I finally "got" The Melvins during this set, they make so much more sense out of the shadow of their more famous fellow Seattle-ites. Skirting fairly close to fellow fringe dwellers VoiVod they ripped through a set of heavy and well constructed songs bearing slight psychedelic overtones. The crowd warmed up to them a little more with tentative fits of moshing breaking out on the floor, but still they were holding back for the main course.

By the time Tool came on stage the crowd had swelled to overflowing

and quite a nice ball of nervous energy built up ready for release. Vocalist Maynard Keenan and bassist Justin Chancellor respectively painted head-to-toe blue and green, prowled their zones like caged tigers, Celts ready to do battle. Meanwhile, guitarist Adam Jones and drummer Danny Carey remained stoic, another day at the office. Of course their office includes a huge projection screen crawling with swirling colors and disembodied eyes staring out over a crazed mosh pit. I thought "Third Eye" was a strange choice for an opener. Not that I'm complaining, mind you, seeing them perform that cut was the main reason I left the house to begin with. And, even though the Bill Hicks samples were absent, I was wholly satisfied five minutes into the set. The rest was like frosting on the cake. The reminder of the show was taken up, primarily, by songs from their latest CD *Anima* rendered fairly close to their album form, but minus and keyboard stylings, including: "Eulogy" and the radio singles "Stinkfist (Track 1)" and "H", which Maynard introduced by breathing heavily into his mic. "Hhhhhhhhhh, Hhhhhhhh!"

When it was all over even leaving the Convention Center provided some amusement. There's nothing like experiencing an evening of apocalyptic sounds, then walking through a street scene that strangely resembles downtown Beirut. God bless Asbury Park...because no one else seems to want to!

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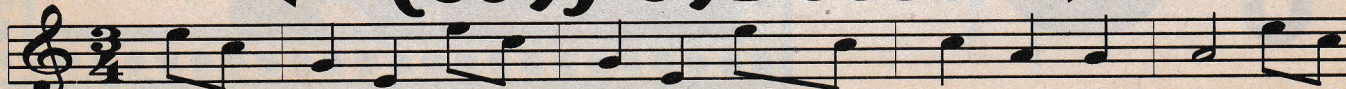
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<b>22</b> Dr. Cheeko's Paradise Island Party FREE BUFFET NO COVER	<b>23</b> Chrissy & the Groove Factory 8 piece Horn Band NO COVER	<b>24</b> LASER KARAOKE with Micke Tanno NO COVER	<b>25</b> DANNY EYER BAND NO COVER	<b>26</b> 9-11pm Happy Hour	<b>27</b> <b>MR</b> <b>PINK</b> NO COVER	<b>28 52nd</b> <b>STREET</b> A BILLY JOEL Tribute Band NO COVER
<b>29</b> Dr. Cheeko's Paradise Island Party FREE BUFFET NO COVER	<b>30</b> Chrissy & the Groove Factory 8 piece Horn Band NO COVER	<b>1</b> LASER KARAOKE with Micke Tanno NO COVER	<b>2</b> DANNY EYER BAND NO COVER	<b>3</b> 9-11pm Happy Hour	<b>4</b> <b>MR</b> <b>PINK</b> NO COVER	<b>5 52nd</b> <b>STREET</b> A BILLY JOEL Tribute Band NO COVER
<b>6</b> Dr. Cheeko's Paradise Island Party FREE BUFFET NO COVER	<b>7</b> Chrissy & the Groove Factory 8 piece Horn Band NO COVER	<b>8</b> LASER KARAOKE with Micke Tanno NO COVER	<b>9</b> DANNY EYER BAND NO COVER	<b>10</b> 9-11pm Happy Hour	<b>11</b> <b>NO</b> <b>CLUE</b> NO COVER	<b>12</b> <b>TBA</b>

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# C.D. REVIEWS



## MEDIA

Artist: ELEVEN ELEVEN

Label: Lionheart Records

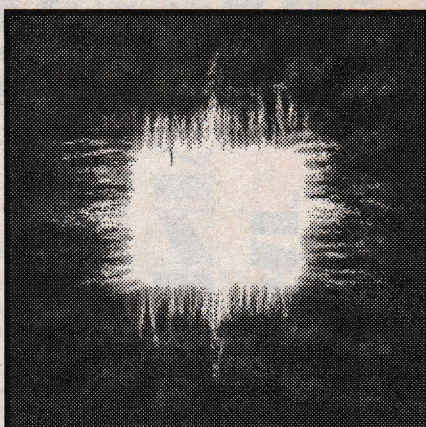
By Danny Eyer

I've just been listening to the new release from our very own "eleven eleven" entitled Media...over and over, and over again.

These guys never cease to amaze my ears. With a musical maturity beyond their birthdays, the listener becomes engulfed in this mood-scape, this alternate world principal writer Jeff Giuliani has created for us. Lyrically, we the listener feel the strains of broken relations, the gleam of hope to come, despite the shadows surrounding it. When you look into the CD sleeve and read along (which we all do, I think), Not only are you getting into a great album, but you also find yourself feeling the satisfaction that comes from reading...yes, a good book!

Since the music is just as important to me in a good listen, I'm happy to say these musicians do NOT disappoint. No man alive could deny the solid, yet extremely comfy groove instilled by drums-o-plenty-meister Rich Franchetta and bass (to the wall) player Al DeNovellis. The guitars, made so tastefully possible by Steve McQuaid, take on a level of their own, weaving in and out of the mix like the ghost of an old friend coming to visit. Jeff Giuliani finds his place among all of this grandeur by singing the songs FOR REAL! The vocals are not just another take in the recording session, he really means them. Man, does he! His keyboards put the haunting melodies in their places, breathing in and out (check out the songs "Shake" and "Cooper's Mill" just to feel what I mean).

It's Hard to describe how this CD makes me feel. Every tune offered up here hangs on it's own, yet still seems to cling to all the others in this really awesome brotherhood. Bright and glowing but still with some dark shadows looming around the tight knit edges, much like the clown pictured on the front of the disc. He speaks volumes for this "media".



## ÆNIMA

Artist: TOOL

Label: (Zoo Recordings)

By Bill Bengle

It's been said that a great video can make any crappy song into a hit, and a great song with a crappy video can make a career. It's also been said that a good song married to a good video can make a career. Now Tool is in a position to prove this theory. The "Sober" video turned the heads of the buying public and that, in turn, drew the attention of the industry. It's make-or-break time under this kind of scrutiny. Luckily for us Tool has come back with their strongest effort to date—and the decision to avoid stroking the industry machinery in order to sell it. Kind of a stick-this-in-your-pipe (whichever one you choose) type message.

While the heavy, riff-laden nature of their music leads to a metal labeling Tool has always pushed that envelope, reaching beyond metal. "Ænima" is no exception, bringing them closer to the Progressive/Epic sound they've been evolving toward, while avoiding the cliché and melodrama that plagues bands like Dream Theatre. Not that there aren't plenty of tasty guitar hooks to hang on but they are woven together with lots of tribal drumming, understated keyboard flourishes, exotic tunings, and sophisticated timings and breaks, twisted samples and sound bits, plus an expanded sonic palette thanks to work by former King Crimson producer David Bottrill. These are most evident on cuts like "The Eye of Satan", "H", "Message to Harry Manback" and especially the closing "Third Eye". Speaking of evolving, that would seem to be the focus singer Maynard James Keenan is working toward here, prying open the third eye, inspired in part by the late comedian/prophet Bill Hicks whose picture graces the inside cover.



## SOUTH DELTA SPACE AGE

Artist: THIRD RAIL

Label: Antillies

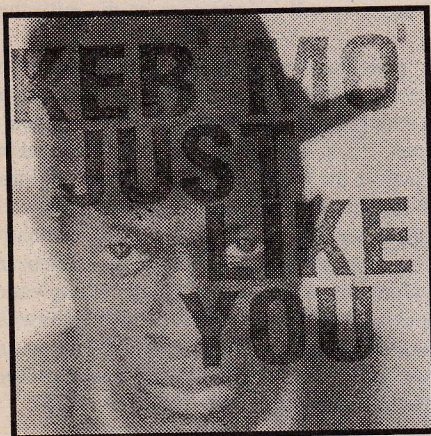
By Bill Bengle

For more than two years this record has sat in Limbo, while those of us left waiting sat on pins and needles waiting...waiting. Now that wait is over and Antillies brings us this eagerly awaited collaboration between a deeply rooted R&B guitar icon, an infamously twisted bassist/über-producer and a gang of space-aged funkmeisters. The result is, as the name would lead you to believe, steeped in heavy tradition, but reaching for the stars.

While not quite as in-your-face twisted as most Bill Laswell inspired projects, the music made by Third Rail still takes to the path less traveled. Based around the guitar work of James "Blood" Ulmer, who's clocked in as a sideman to the Del-Vikings, and the Savoy's as well as Ornette Coleman's Prime Time, and backed by former Meters drummer Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste and Laswell himself on bass, this is a gutbucket full of soulful instrumental work and surprising vocal twists. The album's first cut, "Dusted", the lyrics to which were originally penned by Philly rapper Schooly-D, attests to this. Ulmer even gets a rap cadence going on a couple of cuts. Instrumentally the fireworks come from the subtleties of rhythm and texture. Highly improvised, these tracks stray from whatever framework holds them up, taking full advantage of the keyboard work of ex-Funkadelic key-meister Bernie Worrell and Amina Claudine Myers who yank Laswell's bass work into the realms of pure space-funk, only to have Ulmer pull him right back into the blues. The results are as sure-footed as this balancing act can provide thanks to strong performances by all. Definitely a must have for the blues fan who's grown tired of the standard I-IV-V box pattern and is looking to get that much more out of the listening experience.



# C.D. REVIEWS



## JUST LIKE YOU

Artist: KEB' MO'

Label: Okeh Rec.

By: Chewy

Kevin Moore's debut album on Okeh Records entitled "Keb' Mo'" (a nickname he adopted when he started playing/singing the blues) earned him a W.C. Handy Blues Award in 1995 for "Country/Acoustic Blues Album of the Year." Thus, putting a hell of a lot of pressure on him to top that release with his sophomore outing. But after taking a listen to *Just Like You* it's easy to see that he rose to the occasion.

Keb' shows off his diverse musical styles in this new release, of course there are blues tunes but one can also hear Pop and R&B flavors mixed in with an obvious talent for words. The first track on the disc, "That's Not Love" shows off this pop/acoustic style perfectly. The song is very pop oriented but the addition of acoustic guitar/dobro and banjo brings in a down-home front porch feeling that sets it apart from being pigeon-holed into a pure pop category. The CD then slips into the first of five acoustic bluesy tracks, "Perpetual Blues Machine." With original lyrics and sweet guitar playing along the lines of traditional ol' blues. The title track, "Just Like You" exhibits a major influence of Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne (who sing on it with Keb') in it's musical style. But it is one of the high points of the album.

Keb' Mo' is not to be labeled an acoustic blues performer and the addition of electric guitar tracks on this release show that he is equally at home in both mediums. "Dangerous Moods" is one of the compositions that stands out as a perfect example of how good Keb' really is on electric guitar. The mood of the song is one of Chicago Style with Keb' emphasizing the lyrics with stabbing riffs of guitar notes. Other noticeable tracks on *Just Like You* include a catchy version of the Robert Johnson tune "Last Fair Deal Gone Down" which should open the eyes of most "Deadheads" and the soft ending piece "Lullaby Baby Blues," which slowly lulls the listener out of the album.

Keb' Mo' is a multi-talented, diverse artist and by expressing his interests and experiences in his new release, *Just Like You* should earn him a few new listeners that would otherwise pass him up as just another blues standard.

JUNE 1997



## VALLEJO

Artist: VALLEJO

Label: TVT Records

By Bill Bengle

The fact that this Austin TX. Quintet is Chicanos automatically and irrevocably tends to draw comparisons to another famous band of Latin-American descent. But with this stunning debut these *batos*, by God, earn that type of praise. By weaving Funk and Rock together with Latin rhythms and lacing it with popular sounds of today they do tend to come across, in intent at least, like the good ol' Santana Blues Band, but without totally rehashing what that band did back in '68. And, if they do show a few influences here and there, well, we can look the other way and chalk it up to youth.

The music is instantly gratifying, grabbing the listener with virtuous chops, and an infectious energy without alot of burdensome or pretentious anger and darkness. Actually Vallejo is the complete opposite to the day's lament and "no hope" outlook. It is a joyous celebration full of hope and resignation in the face of one's odds, commanding the listener to move, jump, dance, and, if at all possible, smile. Songs like the reggae-ish "Life Story", soulful "Omega", and the album's deep funk showpiece "Just Another Day" are testament enough to this. Not such a bad alternative to Alternative (to turn a well-worn phrase). The band's tightness can be attributed to it's core of brothers (A.J., Omar, and Alejandro Vallejo) on guitar, bass, and drums (respectively), and the skillful production of Steve Peck who puts all the pieces in proper order. Together they've moved past the Chili Pepper vibe they'd been trapped in as a struggling local band on the Alabama/Georgia "chitlins circuit".



## BANYAN

Artist: BANYAN

Label: (CyberOctave)

By Bill Bengle

The rumble of tribal drums swirls up, engulfing the listener's ears before the rumble of bass and the piercing, discordant guitar make themselves known. Minutes pass as the swelling music passes through various modes; in your face explosiveness to the faintest whisper of ambience and back again. The vocals never come. Wait, the cover clearly states that Stephen Perkins is on this album, Mike Watt too! Isn't this one recorded by the Dust Brothers, the producers of Beck and the Beastie Boys? So what gives? This isn't Alternative Rock.

Well, no sh\*t! Stephen Perkins has, for years, held the promise of being the drum guru of Gen X, but we've hardly seen it since the implosion of Jane's Addiction...until now. Along with David Turin he plans for Banyan to be an ever evolving avant-garde experimental group, taking after it's namesake-a rare type of fig tree whose exposed roots become intermingled with the fruit bearing branches as it develops. Nice pun, huh?

All kidding aside Perkins and Watt, along with guitarist Nels Cline and a mystery man known only as The Freeway Keyboardist, lay down an hour worth of meandering sonic journeys led by Perkins' insistent drumming. Covering the spectrum of tempos and colors Banyan offer free-form punk-jazz to the order of Last Exit and Surrender To The Air. In doing so these proto-punk rockers accomplish what thousands of so-called jazz players fail to do-that is bring excitement, energy, and a sense of danger to improvised music the likes of which would make Miles proud.

## Attention Bands:

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PAGE 19



# QUICKIES

## CD Reviews in about 50 words

(more or less)

BY: BILL BENGLE

**LULL "Journey Through Underworlds" (Rawkus):** Mick Harris, former drummer for Grind-Core pioneers Napalm Death (now with Scorn), serves up what can be described as an addendum to the work he's done with John Zorn and Bill Laswell in the band Painkiller. Heavily processed drum and didgeridoo sounds are layered and molded into three dark and evil soundscapes of what Laswell has termed "Violent Ambient" music. A challenging addition to a Noise-Core aficionado's collection.

**FIVE STAR GALAXY "Part Two: The Galaxy Strikes Back" (Shadow Records):** Second shot in an introductory trilogy showcasing fourteen superior tracks from this tight knit group of electronic artists based in Lausanne, Switzerland. Leading innovators in the growing electro-ambient-jazz movement, led by DJ Rollercone (aka Patrick Duvoisin), they jump from genre to genre with ease and grace blending futuristic synth textures with jazzy acoustic sounds and a beat that is, hands down, phatty- phat, phat!

**CITIZEN FISH "Thirst" (Blurg/Lookout Records):** Another fine missive from the latest incarnation of London's Subhumans/Culture Shock. "Thirst" offers more circa '82 punk rock co-mingled with ska and garage style jamming that made them a fixture on the underground/festival scene for over a decade. This is the real deal—what bands like Rancid or Offspring wish they could be. Vocalist Dick is still angry (way angry) and railing against repression of all sorts with his trademark clarity and logic. He's unrelentless as he attacks; apathy, ignorance, the church, the ruling classes, and the false desires created and fed by the pop music industry. Think/Act/Blurg!

**CYCOMOTO GOAT "Braille" (What Are Records?):** Hoboken's favorite underdogs are back to follow up to 1994's impressive "Alkaline" (Sector Z Records). "Braille" shows the group perfecting their psychedelic/garage band chops and all-tube sound and is bolstered by a number of guests banging away on; trumpet, Hammond B-3, electric violin, and harmonica. Harmonica? Did someone say harmonica? Well, Cyco-friend John Popper shows he's not too big for his britches (ho-ho) by lending his trademark licks as well. Guests aside CMG are in fine form here and show themselves to be a strong voice from the fringe that's well worth seeking out!

**VARIOUS ARTISTS "Howard Stern's Private Parts Soundtrack" (WB):** Film soundtracks are always a great excuse for artists to pursue a fun project in an odd setting, and to slip your favorite bands a little extra residuals. Stern's album is a little of both. Classic rock staples like Nugent, AC/DC, Ramones, and Cheap Trick all provide their biggest hits, and Green Day peel off a letter perfect version of the Kink's "Tired". But, the exciting bits come from collaborations like; L.L. Cool J with the Chilli Peppers, Ozzy with Type O, and Howard himself getting to do a duet with Rob Zombie. The big seller, though, is Rick Rubin's "Ben Stern Megamix" dropping the infamous "Sit Down, Shut Up!" tapes of Howard's Dad over an insistent House beat. Film dialogue snippets are just the icing on the cake. Howard rules!

**PRESSUREHED "Explaining The Unexplained" (Cleopatra):** Dark, heavy, primal...gorgeous! This tenth anniversary recording of one of the U.S.'s premiere (and most prolific) underground psychedelic/space rock bands is just that a probe into deep space with the aliens ripping doughnuts on the Van Allen Belt and tossing beer cans out the window. The unfettered three guitar attack is well met by incredible

cutting edge electronic effects making this one standout among their many projects, including backing Hawkwind co-founder Nik Turner's work. A too-cool addition is the book insert that has a concise synopsis of the subject of each song; alien abductions, modern day dinosaurs and woolly mammoths, the Mayan calendar, Nessie and Sasquatch, and more. Space, it would seem, is still infinite even as the millenium approaches.

**DISCO BISCUITS "Encephalous Crime" (Self-Released):** If you are looking for your whole understanding of music to be blasted apart, and then re-arranged in a song, Disco Biscuits may not be what you're looking for...yet. However, if you are looking for some butt-shakin', high energy, good time jams in the vein of Phish, moe., and God Street Wine look no further! While still working their way out of infancy this Philly quartet are making a bee line toward a unique and distinctive sound hinged upon the interplay between bassist Marc Brownstein and guitarist Jon "Barber" Gutwillig and have made quite an impression on the East Coast "hippie jam band" scene. While, at times, Gutwillig might show a bit too much of Trey in his licks, their boisterous take on Zappa's "Pygmy Twylite" persuades me to look the other way. **contact: Disco Biscuits 4017 Baltimore Ave. Apt. D-1 Philly, Pa. 19104 (215) 222-7938.**

**ASTRALASIA "Seven Pointed Star" (Hypnotic):** Pulse is the keyword here. A strong, steady pulse lay at the heart of this album from former members of festival band Magick Mushroom. Whether it is carried by the layered synths, or the heavy, almost hard-core like in bpm's and intensity, kick drum beats, it's the pulse that pulls you into this music and holds you there as if you'd been sucked into a vortex. Once there the music surrounds you, revealing itself within the trance it forces upon you, and opens up like the petals of a blooming rose. This is a trance gem!

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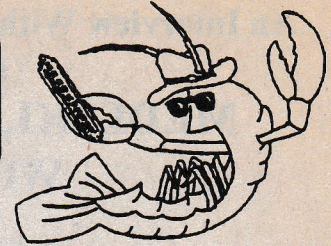
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# THE BLUE WAVE

By Ron Stinson



Welcome to the Blue Wave! Spring has finally sprung, and the clubs and restaurants are coming alive! The Blues are back in town!

First, I'd like to talk about the 11th annual HI-LAND FARMS EGG FESTIVAL, located on Jimmy Leeds road in Galloway Township. Rumor had this two day festival dead and buried two years ago, but this is not so! The Egg Fest is always held on the first Saturday in June. This year the date is JUNE 7, with camp setup starting around 12:00 noon! This festival is normally a two-day event, lasting most of the weekend! The music is normally of the blues variety, and has traditionally featured Pat, Sty, Mario, and friends of TOO BAD JIM! The band will start to play around 5:00 P.M. till 11:00 P.M. Saturday night! A donation of \$5.00 will get you some Great Music & all the food you can eat! If you can, bring a covered dish, and volunteers to help run this event are always accepted! In the evening, there is usually a bonfire, and everyone parties all night! This is a very popular local event, and has become the official kickoff of the summer! The Hi-land Egg Farm is located across from Louies Inn on Jimmy Leeds Road. Don't Miss It!

The second event that I have to tell you about is the 3rd Annual FIREBASE BLUES, located on Rt. 50, in Mays Landing. Sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of America, chapter 228. This local blues festival is growing larger every year! This year it will be held on Saturday, July 12, with the rain date on Sunday, July 13th. The bands that will play are THE JONES, PAUL TOZ, SUSAN AND THE CHAIN GANG, THE BALISTIC BLUES BAND, POCKET CHANGE, and THE DANNY EYER BAND. Cost for this event is \$5.00. The food is inexpensive, the beer cold, and the BBQ is excellent! Start time is 12:00 Noon till 7:00 PM. The event will be held at the VFW hall, on the picnic grounds behind the hall. (PS the Vets always has a Killer Sound System, and even though they use local bands, the sound is spectacular!)

OK, I have some very good news for local blue's fans! Tyson Merryman, formally the head chef at the Anchorage Tavern, has purchased the TUCKAHOE INN! He is a big blues fan! He renovated the Tuckahoe Inn, located at 1 Harbor Rd., Beasleys Point, just outside of Somers Point.

In the back of the Tuckahoe Inn, on the BACK BAY CAFE deck, every weekend for the summer, will be some of the best local and regional blues bands, performing for you! The bands will perform every Friday and Saturday from 9:00 PM till 1:00 PM, and on Sundays, they will play from 4:00 PM till 8:00 PM. This will start on Friday, May 23, till end of summer! The following list will show you he's serious about the blues here at the Jersey Shore!

1 June SUSAN AND THE CHAIN GANG

6 June THE BALISTIC BLUES BAND

7 June JUNE & THE HITMEN

8 June LIQUID CAPSULE

13 June JUNE & ATHE HITMEN

14 June VODOODES

15 June BOB SMITH BLUES BAND

20 June FLOYD HUNTER BLUES BAND

21 June THIRD DEGREE BURN

22 June MARK STINGER & THE SWARM

27 June BOB SMITH BLUES BAND

26 June (Thursday) HYLAND YOUNG BAND

29 June HERD OF BLUES

This is serious stuff! Also, I must tell you the food is very good at the Inn! You have to check this place out!

One more note! Booger Jones has changed their name to The Jones! I guess they took The Heat! Anyway, I'm out of room, and

out of time, so I'll say to you, "NO BLUES IS BAD NEWS, and stay IN TUNE, SEE YA!"



PAUL TOZ at last years FIREBASE BLUES FESTIVAL

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# An Interview With BILLY MARTIN of: MEDESKI, MARTIN, & WOOD

By Bill Bengle

After years of relentless traveling and playing in basically any venue that would have them, from coffeehouse to rock bar, Medeski Martin & Wood are gaining the momentum they've been seeking for so long, and so richly deserve. Their latest release *Shack Man* (Rykko/Grammavision) has met acclaim from both jazz and rock press sources and their audience, just about as diverse as their musical influences, is expanding exponentially. Now, after a month of rest, rehearsal, and recording, poised on the eve of a national tour, the trio the brought dance back into jazz, improvisation back into rock, and intelligence back into funk, has it's collective eyes fixed firmly on the road ahead.

I spoke briefly with drummer Billy Martin and was pleased to find him a genuinely humble, sincere, and committed to the music he, and him companions, have created...

**IT:** In Tune: Well, let me start simply; what planet did you guys come from?

**Billy Martin:** (Laughs) Same planet you come from!

**IT:** Right! In the press you've been called everything from "Organic Acid Jazz" to "Funk-Fusion" to "Neo-Hippie Jam Rock" but you remain happily uncategorizable. How would you describe your band and your music to someone who's never heard it.

**BM:** I would categorize it as "Free Range Music".

**IT:** Where'd you come up with that term?

**BM:** Our lawyer mentioned it yesterday. He was making an analogy to something else in the business world. I thought "wow, that's a good name." Free Range, that the best term I've heard so far. I have a hard time describing anything with words, that's why I play music. That's why I like to improvise, and why I paint and do more artistic things, without using words. The only way I can really communicate well is through my instrument, through drums, through writing. I really can't put into words what we do.

**IT:** So basically someone would have to just listen first and make their own judgments?

**BM:** Yeah, I wouldn't want to influence anybody's impressions. I would have them listen to it first. Then I would talk to them about it and if they want to get into specific things that we can talk about, you know, the influences that I have that go into the music.

**IT:** What would some of those influences be?

**BM:** It's a wide range of things from all forms of music, and in no particular order; jazz, funk, to contemporary classical to African and Caribbean stuff.

**IT:** And you've basically been immersed in the arts since you were a child, right?

**BM:** Well, yeah, my parents were. My dad was a violinist, my mom was a dancer. Not as creative as you can get with those forms, but, they were definitely in the arts and it was a big influence on me. Growing up listening to music my dad played, from Stravinsky to Chikovski to Mozart to Beethoven to doing movie scores. My mom, watching her dance and {listening to} the music she used, more of the Broadway stuff. You know, the occasional Duke Ellington song here and there, occasional Stevie Wonder to more current popular dance music. My brothers, they were about ten years older than me, when they were teenagers I was, like, seven or eight and they were listening to; Sly Stone, James Brown, Allman Brothers, that era, there was the Stones. You know, all that stuff.

**IT:** Is that what drew you into playing music, just being around that? Was that maybe a way for you to get to hang with your big brothers?

**BM:** Yeah, well, they were always into music, and they always wanted to play. They did play, my brother Kenny played the drums and my brother Alan played guitar and I used to watch them and get excited about that. But they just kinda did it at home, it was kinda make believe, but they practiced and learned a little bit but they weren't into too much. So {music} was something I just sort of discovered, when my brother Kenny put the drums in the closet I kind of took them out later on and set them up and made believe I was playing the drums. I put records on and played along. It was just something I grew into slowly. All those influences have alot to do with why and how I play. The early influences were there.

**IT:** When you first got together with John and Chris as MMW was the sound that you've achieved something you knew you were after, did you set your sights toward it? Was it something you discussed among yourselves and said "this is where we want to go."?

**BM:** No. I mean, first of all we didn't have a real conceptual idea of what we wanted to do except we wanted to improvise and create the music collectively. There was no one person leading the way. We were all leading and following each other collectively. We never decided at any time the direction of the band. We didn't really decide what kind of records they were going to be. As far as recording, wherever we were at the time we tried to capture the best we were doing at that time. We did share alot of interests; my affinity for hip-hop and alot of African music, and that had an influence on the direction we were going in. John {Medeski} was into lots of classical music and, of course, into the jazz thing and into completely free playing. Chris kind of went along with everything we did. He had his ideas too. We just shared what we liked, played each other records and we would just play and it would come out.

**IT:** And at what point did you realize you had something really special on your hands and wanted to stick with it to the point of putting your stuff into storage and heading out on the road?

**BM:** The minute we played. I knew right away, the first time the three of us got together. John and I got together and did drum/organ duets in my loft in Brooklyn about six years ago, and then John and Chris did some duets at the Village Gate. Then I came down and sat in. Then we had done some sessions at my place, and had a rehearsal/jam session. The minute we started playing I knew that this was the best situation I'd been in. I felt like anything could happen and they were very supportive guys, we were very excited. The first thing we played, without talking about it, was already a tune. We already had a tune written.

**IT:** Up to that point all three of you were engaged as sidemen for various jazz projects, but as MMW you proceeded as more of an archetype rock band with equal input, road work etc. did that foster a higher level of creativity?

**BM:** Yeah, it was moreso. Those other projects weren't as dictated as it seems, but yeah. It was a big step. All of our ideas were just as important as the other person's. It was the next step that we had to take. We were involved in all these side gigs, and we'll always do that, we need that outside influence and input/output experience, but that's how it had to happen.

**IT:** Was it hard for you to sever all those other playing relationships, put them on hold, when you struck out on the road?

**BM:** No, there was nothing hard about making that decision because we knew it was the right thing. It felt really good. We knew that it was what we wanted to do. The only sacrifice was financially giving up a little bit of that security, but we made it through that period. We had to leave the bands and make decisions and make a commitment. We were committed to this band.

**IT:** So, how is it that MMW is able to bring a jazz sound, jazz music, improvised music, to an American audience where so many other artists feel that they have to go to Japan or Europe to find an audience?

**BM:** Well, it's an unusual thing we encountered. I always believed that whatever you do, no matter what it is, and it's good, and if you get it out there into the world, people are going to like it. Our approach was kind of like that. It was like: we know we got something, we want to play, we know we're pretty good. We are humble guys, but we know that what we were doing people could relate to, we're down to Earth. We like to have a balance of both, we like to groove, we like to get funky. We like to do the rock thing, the dance thing. Which I think is very common, it's kind of universal, dance music. We knew that if we could combine that with the jazz that that could work. Also, the free stuff too. Some people aren't into that free music but it really has to do with the players and if their good enough people are going to like it. We knew that just to get out onto the road and play for some people, which was also a kind of a testing ground for us, to see what the reactions were. I knew there was an audience out there. I'd done some Knitting Factory tours and there weren't alot of people but there were clubs all throughout the U.S. that seemed open to more creative music and art. They were the coffeehouses and the alternative clubs in all the different college towns and art communities. We just kind of found our way, found the clubs that were the right ones. Most jazz musicians have no choice. Alot of them are already, alot of them are older...I don't know alot of young jazz musicians who even tour Europe. Particularly alot of jazz musicians do tour Europe and Japan, at least that's how it has been over the past twenty years and the audience is more open to that kind of music. That's a long winded answer, I'm sorry.

**IT:** That's okay! It seems to me that younger jazz musicians, and musicians in general, don't want to pay those types of dues that MMW has. You guys forged a path much the same way Black Flag did, when there were no clubs for them to play in, no punk places, it wasn't easy.



**You guys seem to have done the same thing, you had to work for it. Why is it so many musicians don't want to pay those dues?**

**BM:** Because they're too busy watching TV, I guess. I think a lot of people feel that they deserve it because they've been practicing in their rooms for so long that they feel they've already paid their dues. I think a lot of them don't realize that that's only part of it. We're in this age where it's like bands are getting signed for hundreds and thousands of dollars to million dollar deals. They become superstars overnight. My generation has grown up and watched this happen, and people just think that's the way it is and that's the way it should be. That's wrong. If you want to be independent, first of all, you've got to do it yourself. A lot of people just skip a step, they get signed with a record company and they miss out on that independence. They sign that contract then they are slaves. I'm not saying it's a bad thing to be signed to a record label it's just that it's better to things yourself first. Learn about how it works so that when you do get to that point you'll know what kinds of rules you can break and change. Things like that. Yeah, I think laziness, growing up in a world where there's huge record contracts, MTV and I don't think people realize that you can just get in your car and play for people. Rent a car, buy a car, borrow a car and just start playing in different clubs and go to different places. Do it yourself. Pick up the musician's tour guide and look at all the clubs in the country.

**IT:** As far as your music goes, it always seemed to me that the best jazz of each era reflected the popular music of those times, took it and made it its own and extend on it. I'm thinking of, like, Duke Ellington or Coltrane with "My Favorite Things", and these guys are worshipped. Still, you guys are getting flack for doing the same thing. One quote I read said you were "cashing in on the chic of Acid-Jazz".

**BM:** Well the thing is whoever said that doesn't even realize that when we started, formed this band and started playing what we were playing Acid-Jazz wasn't even around. The term wasn't even around. That's just a commercial name for a certain type of music. We're not Acid-Jazz. The real Acid-Jazz is this British based dance/party music with DJ's and sometimes live musicians. We're not riding on any fame of any commercial success of anybody else. We did this ourselves. This is our own thing. Our music isn't anything like Acid-Jazz, and if you have a good ear you can tell the difference. As far as that form where live musicians are playing music that is based on combining a dance form with jazz, that's where original jazz came out of. Dance music. You can say Duke Ellington is Acid-Jazz! He toured the country playing dance halls. Lionel Hampton too. Count Basie, Satchmo, and all those cats. That was dance music, that was the popular music of the day. So we're just doing the same thing. Not consciously trying to cop what they were doing, we just do what we like to do. Acid-Jazz is gone as far as I'm concerned. That whole fad is gone nobody cares about it anymore. As far as the big hype about what it was about is gone. Jungle, rave, that's what's in the clubs right now.

**IT:** Do you guys even care what critics have to say about your music at all?

**BM:** Well, I do and I don't. I don't really spend a lot of time trying to understand {them}. I don't take anything to hear, any critical comments. If I did I'd probably be very insecure if I relied on that for my...to pump my ego up. Although we've gotten a lot of good reviews. I just don't rely on what critics say in order to keep me going. I know that I'll never please everybody. It's impossible to like everything that any one band does all the time. Basically I don't care what critics say, I think it's all valid. As long as it's sincere, it's all valid. Everybody has their own perspective on what they see and hear, and it's different than the next person.

**IT:** What about your audience? How would you describe them, as you see them.

**BM:** Our audience changes from city to city, country to country. In general our audience in the U.S., where we have mostly been touring, is a younger audience, mostly college—I'm generalizing now—that are open to more improvising than a lot of other bands that they see. I can't really say who they are or what they are about.

**IT:** Is the constant connection the press makes between you and the Grateful Dead and Phish in particular a little odious, a little burdensome?

**BM:** There is a phenomenon happening. I feel like we've been chosen by a certain kind of subculture which you can say, they are Phish/Deadheads. There are a lot of people out there that I see that are kids with the dreadlocks and they smoke a lot of pot and spin around like whirling dervishes. Yeah there's always some group of people that are like that at our shows in the U.S. I welcome all tribes from all over. I'm thankful that they come and support us. I think we've been chosen by that subculture so the critics feel that they have to make note of that and write about it. That's okay, but I don't want that to limit our chance to share our music with other people. I hope people aren't bugged out by it, and are like "oh man, I don't want to be

in a room full of hippies" or whatever.

**IT:** Can you tell us something about your new CD ("Bubblehouse" remix EP on Ryko/Grammavision)?

**BM:** That's basically a remix record with a bonus track. The bonus track is something we recorded during the time we did *Shack Man* and it's a good piece of music that we didn't think would fit in with the overall shape of the record. Somehow we got them to release it. The remixes are; one is of the "Bubblehouse" song that's done by this cat DJ Olive and his group a couple of other guys. (—Editor note: they are the DJ collective "We") I've only met DJ Olive and worked with him in a live situation—he's amazing, flying in all kinds of different records and sounds and shit. He's more of that kind of rave, Jungle, Bass+Drum, style. He's very creative and he completely reconstructed our songs almost to the point where you don't recognize them. That's his take on us, his interpretation of "Bubblehouse" and "SpyKiss". And then there's "Dracula" which is {done by} Jason J. Logic. He's a friend of ours from the Bronx who's like this hip-hop DJ and he does a more hip-hop style remix that's funky and danceable, and {John} Zorn played over that one. That's the record. It's just a different take on some of the music we did. We'll be doing more of that, we like the whole remix concept, reinterpreting the music and then getting it out to the dance clubs because, I think, in some ways our record is so raw that the DJ's don't really pick it up and play it in the clubs. We thought, let's have some DJ's remix the stuff and see if people respond.

**IT:** Will we see more experimentation with that, more electronics and sampling?

**BM:** I don't know. I think what you're going to see from us is more experimenting with what we already do, as far as our instruments. We're going to learn more about the instruments that we play. If anybody is being more experimental and expanding with electronics is John. I don't think sampling is going to be a major part of any piece of music that we do. But, you never know! I'm open to all forms, I'm open to all that stuff. I think you can do good with any of that.

**IT:** You are about to embark on a U.S. tour. What, if anything, has come out of the *Shack Party* residency you did at the Knitting Factory, and will we see some of that on stage?

**BM:** The *Shack Party* was a way for us to get away from the normal MMW gig, and a way for us to collaborate with other musicians, which sort of forced us to stay in New York because it was every week at the Knitting Factory. We had a chance to stretch out, to take a slightly different approach. I think what we got out of that was some good music, things that worked and didn't work, we recorded some of it so we can listen to it and so we can get some music out of it. This tour is going to be...there's going to be some new material that we'll be working on. Every night we'll be working on different pieces of music and they'll change from night to night, I'm sure. They will probably end up being some songs on the next record, maybe.

**IT:** Can you describe where you think your music is headed now?

**BM:** We're just going to continue to do what we do, we're going to continue to challenge ourselves. We haven't made any conscious decision to change our direction, we're still coming up with a lot of ideas and they're still pretty much...they sound like MMW, not anybody else. I can't tell you what it's going to be. At the time when we record we record, wherever we are at that time is what we're going to do. So, I don't know. Every day's a different approach. We just did a tune on a new film, that's going to come out at the end of the winter, it's called "The End Of Violence". We just got out of the studio recording that track. That'll be fun.

**IT:** One last thing here, have you, as a group, met or exceeded your hope for success both musically and financially.

**BM:** I think we are overwhelmed with the opportunities that are coming around now. There are lots of business opportunities for us. We're realizing that that's not what's important. What's important is to do what we do best and make music. I think that we're very happy with where we're at. We're very pleased and we feel very lucky and we feel very successful. If we decided not to do it anymore I would be very content with what we've accomplished, but that's not going to happen. We are going to continue what we do and it's going to grow and it's going to be exciting. Hopefully we'll be pushing the envelope. Yeah, I think we're successful in what we've done. We have a manager, a booking agent, a lawyer, we're set up in such a way that we can now get out and get the music out there to the people. We just need a good record company that's all.

BILL MARTIN a selected discography

With Medeski, Martin & Wood:

"Notes From The Underground" (Accurate Records)

"It's A Jungle In There" (Grammavision/Ryko)

"Friday Afternoon In The Universe" (Grammavision/Ryko)

"Shack Man" (Grammavision/Ryko)

"Bubblehouse CD 5" (Grammavision/Ryko)



# BAND CALENDARS



## Orange Blossom

Hotline 629-5915

### JUN

- 13 Country Pine Inn, Mays Landing
- 14 Country Pine Inn, Mays Landing
- 15 Country Pine Inn, Mays Landing
- 20 Red Bull, North Cape May
- 27 JD's Pub & Grille, Smithville
- 28 Black Cat, Absecon

### JUL

- 5 Yogi Bear Campground, Mays Landing
- 12 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 18 Cherrywood Lounge, Blackwood
- 19 Black Cat, Absecon



## MOONSEED

### JUN

- 7 C.B.G.B.'s, NYC
- 8 Danny Kain's Birthday, NJ
- 12 Shooters, Philly
- 21 Club Wild, Philly
- 28 Elbow Room, NY

### JUL

- 4 Cherrywood Lounge, Blackwood
- 24 Cherrywood Lounge, Blackwood
- 26 Crilley's Circle Tavern, Brigantine (LMA Showcase)



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for more info 697-3324

### JUL

- 18 Middle East, Phila.

### AUG

- 17 Delareto's, Galloway

## Susan & the Chain Gang

### JUN

- 1 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point (4-8pm)
- 5 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 6 St George's Pub, Brigantine
- 8 Pearl Restaunt, Somers Point
- 13 Rumors Rib Room, Buena
- 19 Moby Dick's, Point Pleasant
- 20 JD's, Smithville
- 28 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point (4-8pm)

### JUL

- 11 St Georges Pub, Brigantine
- 12 Fire Base Blues Festival, Mays Landing
- 14 Club 34, Philly
- 26 Brownies Lodge, Bargaintown

## Cat Daddy

hotline & bookings  
(609) 853-0722

### JUN

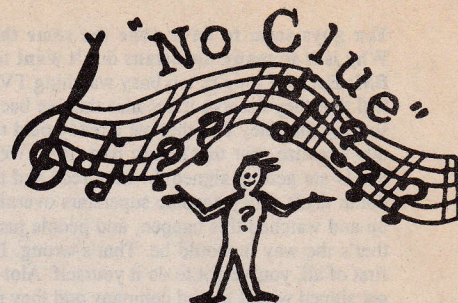
- 14 Red, Hot & Blue, Cherry Hill
- 22 Southwood Bar & Grill, Woodbury

### JUL

- 18 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Vineland

### AUG

- 15 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Berlin (formerly J. Bodine's)
- 22 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Vineland



for bookings call Mike Crossan  
(609) 652-3183

### JUN

- 7 Seafood Festival, Gardner's Basin AC
- 14 JD's Pub & Grille, Smithville
- 20 Private Party (Flying Cloud Cafe, AC)
- 21 Hi Point, Absecon
- 28 Schooners, Somers Point
- 29 Flying Cloud Cafe, AC

### JUL

- 5 Belhaven Campground, Green Bank
- 12 Schooners, Somers Point
- 19 Hi Point, Absecon
- 20 Flying Cloud Cafe, AC

### AUG

- 2 Belhaven Campground, Green Bank
- 16 Hi Point, Absecon



## The Fabulous Menzel Bros.

Hotline 748-1162

### JUL

- 26 Schooners, Somers Point

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Every Wed. Crilley's Circle Tavern,  
Brigantine (starting June 25)

### JUN

- 6 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 7 Brownies Lodge, Bargaintown
- 8 Brownies Lodge
- 15 Brownies Lodge
- 19 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 20 Fireside, Vineland
- 28 Rumors Rib Room, Buena
- 29 Brownies Lodge

### JUL

- 5 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Berlin  
(formerly J. Bodine's)
- 12 Fire Base Blues Festival, Mays  
Landing (after noon jig)
- 12 Fireside, Vineland
- 13 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point(4-8pm)
- 19 Rumors Rib Room, Buena

## The Vern Thing

Every Thurs. Rumors Rib Room, Buena  
(Open Jam - 10 pm to 2am)



### JUN

- 7 11th annual HI-LAND FARMS EGG  
FESTIVAL, Galloway Township  
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## Pocket Change

for bookings & info. call Diane  
(609) 794-2890

### JUN

- 7 Rumors Rib Room, Buena
- 13 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Vineland
- 14 Red, Hot & Blue, Cherry Hill (Blues  
Fest) 5:30-6:40pm
- 14 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Berlin  
(formerly J. Bodine's)
- 21 Fat Jack's BBQ & Blues, Vineland
- 25 Waterfront, Somers Point

### JUL

- 4 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point
- 12 Fire Base Blues Festival, Mays  
Landing
- 16 Waterfront, Somers Point
- 19 Hamilton Mall, Mays Landing
- 20 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point
- 26 Red, Hot & Blue, Cherry Hill

## The JONES

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for bookings & info. call:  
Doug Gershuny at (609) 652-9178  
or Steve Ivie at (609) 645-0429

### JUN

- 14 Red, Hot & Blue, Cherry Hill (Blues  
Fest)

### JUL

- 5 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point
- 12 Fire Base Blues Festival, Mays  
Landing (after noon jig)
- 19 JD's Pub & Grille, Smithville

### AUG

- 1 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point
- 8 Tony Mart's Reunion at Omars,  
Margate
- 10 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point
- 16 JD's Pub & Grille, Smithville
- 24 Tuckahoe Inn, Beesley's Point



Everybody Do It!

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### JUN

- 6 Green Bank Inn, Green Bank
- 7 Private Party
- 12 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 13 Delareto's, Galloway
- 14 Private Wedding
- 15 Green Bank Inn, Green Bank (5:30-  
10pm)
- 20 Rio Station, Rio Grande
- 21 Marmora Fire Co., Marmora (2-5pm)
- 22 Brownies Lodge, Bargaintown (4-  
8pm)
- 26 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 27 Black Cat, Absecon
- 28 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 29 Green Bank Inn, Green Bank

### JUL

- 5 Flying Cloud Cafe, AC (2-6pm)
- 5 Brownies Lodge, Bargaintown (10-  
2am)
- 10 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 11 Rio Station, Rio Grande
- 12 JD's Pub & Grille, Smithville
- 13 Galloway Municipal Building,  
Galloway(Free Concert 6pm)
- 18 Green Bank Inn, Green Bank
- 19 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 24 Jack's Place, Pleasantville
- 25 Rio Station, Rio Grande
- 26 Flying Cloud Cafe, AC (2-6pm)
- 26 Black Cat, Absecon (10-2am)
- 27 Green Bank Inn, Green Bank



Jeff X

for bookings & info.  
call 926-9508

Every Wed. Grotto Lounge, Atlantic City

### JUN

- 27 Good Guys, Mays Landing



### JUN

- 14 Schooners, Somers Point



# INTERVIEW WITH: **STEVE HILLAGE**

## of **SYSTEM 7**

BY: BILL BENGLE

(With much appreciated help from DJ Pete!)

Sometime in the early Eighties Steve Hillage disappeared. Not entirely, of course, but ask any music fan or media person and they would have just shrugged their shoulders, scratched their heads and gone on their way. At one time the name Steve Hillage was synonymous with the Progressive era, a guitar wielding Jerry Garcia-like figure in the U.K. throughout the seventies. Once the guitarist for Daevid Allen's legendary French/English collective Gong, he went on to record several highly successful solo albums collaborating with the likes of Todd Rundgren's Utopia and Pink Floyd's Nick Mason, and recording the (soon to be) influential "Rainbow Dome Musick" LP. But, by the early eighties, with the sonic pendulum firmly swinging toward punk, Hillage received less and less attention, then...poof!

But, if one were to squint at the fine print, his name did appear in the liner notes of many, many records until the release of The Orb's groundbreaking "Beyond Ultraworld" and "UFOrb" albums which featured him, and his longtime partner Miquette Giraudy, prominently as player and songwriter. The music on these records was curiously unlike anything that had come before and would lay the blueprint for what would come.

Now, as electronic music begins to gather its strength for a great push into America, Steve Hillage is busily continuing along the path he'd set out upon years ago, chasing the tail of the cutting edge dragon with his collaborative project System 7. And, while laboring in the studio on his latest album, he took an hour to discuss his role in the electronica revolution and his insight into its growth, development, and the curiously slow progress it's made across the pond...

**IN TUNE:** I suppose that starting from the beginning would be best so, as an introduction could you tell us how you first got involved in making techno and electronic music?

**STEVE HILLAGE:** Well, to a certain extent we were always there. You know, right from what we were doing with Gong straight through what we were doing in the late 70's. I've been specializing the way electric guitar and electronics and synthesizers work together. It was just like a natural progression for us. We found ourselves irresistibly drawn to the exploding dance music movement in the late 80's in England. This was still right at the beginning of it, so we've been part of it now for more than seven years. We've actually had an influence on it.

**IT:** It's been said that you turned away from the Prog-rock of the late 70's because of its *messianic* qualities, the performer being elevated to a position above the audience, and so on.

**SH:** Well, that was one of the things. It was the whole Rock thing, the whole taking Rock and Roll live approach, it bored us completely! By the end of the 70's we were bored with that, and that's why we stopped touring. I got much more involved in record production, producing all kinds of things by a lot of other people. And that, of course, during the 80's, obviously gave us much more experience at working at mixing desks and working in the studio, and MIDI sequencing and samplers. So, I sort of grew up along with this technology.

**IT:** Do you find you prefer working in the studio to working live now?

**SH:** No. We do about twenty to twenty-five live shows a year now. I haven't got the time to do any more than that, really, because we do quite a lot of work with System 7 in the studio and I still do quite a lot of production work. I normally do two or three album projects a year. So I'm pretty busy, really. We like playing live! It's working very well for us in the U.K., and Europe and Japan.

**IT:** I saw you perform at the Limelight in New York, a couple years back, with DJ Reece where it was you on guitar and him spinning records and such.

**SH:** Right!

**IT:** Are your performances small like that, or do you put on the large spectacle like, say, Eat Static with the light shows and huge amounts of equipment?

**SH:** Well, that [Limelight show] was just me playing with DJ Reece, it wasn't System 7. We don't carry around a huge production, but we do work with the same lighting designer as Eat Static use. It normally looks pretty impressive.

**IT:** Do you feel that having played in live rock and rock/jazz formats gives you an edge performance-wise, as opposed to a group who hasn't?

**SH:** I don't think it makes much difference, really. I mean you use whatever ammunition you've got. Part of our ammo is the fact that we have this long experience in playing live stuff that also was involved with a lot of echo looping and such which seems to work very well with programmed beats. I think live techno is a question of each person doing what they are best at. Orbital, for example, are about the most sophisticated, advanced live techno act, in terms of just sheer musicality, and they never played in bands before. So, I don't really think it makes much difference.

**IT:** Does the near anonymity of playing a techno gig appeal to you more than, say, being the object of an audience's attention?

**SH:** Well this relates back to my negative comments about how I felt Prog-Rock developed in the 70's. I don't think techno is as anonymous now as it was, say, five years ago. I don't know how it is in America but in the U.K. now there are definite techno "stars". One thinks particularly of Chemical Brothers, Underworld, and the Prodigy. Still the whole basis of the dance music is still down to DJ's, and people dancing. So, there's an element of participation and equality between the people who are performing and the people who are participating and dancing. It's a much more interactive thing than a strait concert, where the horde of disciples and the God-like figure in the band on the stage and all the attention is directed onto the stage. I don't like that. With techno music the lights shouldn't be only on the stage but on the people. You want to create the complete live psychedelic experience for everybody in the room. It's not just like watching a cinema, it's something you participate in. I'm still sort of a rave idealist.

**IT:** Do you still participate in rave culture much?

**SH:** Well we've been part of rave culture since it started...

**IT:** Well, I mean more as a participant rather than a performer.

**SH:** Oh! We go to clubs quite a lot! Obviously when I'm working in the studio I don't have the time to go every night. Quite often we go once or twice a week. One club we've been going to quite a lot recently, that we find very inspirational, is called "Anokha". It's on a Monday at the Blue Note, and it's run by a guy named Talvin Singh. He's devised this fantastic new style of music that fuses Indian tablas with Drum+Bass beats. It's absolutely fantastic. It's a real joy to go down there, real inspiring. Also, going to see various other DJ's I get a lot of inspiration for other tracks and going to listen to stuff in clubs, listening to the top DJ's like Carl Cox, or Jeff Mills. I saw Derrick May, who we know very well, at a club last week. It was the most fantastic DJ performance I've seen by him, and I've seen him a dozen times.

**IT:** System 7 is rooted deeply in collaborations, as you mentioned Derrick May. Who would you like to see System 7 working with in the future?

**SH:** We're actually working on a new album at the moment. In fact here is less collaboration on this album, actually. We started writing some stuff back in October and November, we came up with a lot of really good ideas and thought "we've got an album here!". So, it just happened like that. One person who we are going to do some collaboration with is the gentleman I mentioned earlier, Talvin Singh. We wanted to get some of the Anokha vibe onto some of our tracks and create something fresh with him.

**IT:** You've got two relatively recent releases here in the U.S. ("Power of Seven" and "System Express" both avail. on Hypnotic/Cleopatra), how do you see them differing from the previous work ("System 7.3" on Astralwerks Records) and what you are working on right now?

**SH:** As far as America is concerned it's the first time we've been able to release a record with our real name, System 7. Although we like the name 777, we had to use that name when we were on Astralwerks, because when we were signed in 1990 there was another band with the name System 7 in America. There was a problem. But, now the problem is no more, so that's good. "Power of Seven" is kind of a tougher record than the ".3". "System Express" that's a special thing. I like the way all the tracks are mixed flowing together, and I'll probably keep that approach for the next album. The new album that we're working on at the moment has a richer sound than "Power of Seven". There are some parallels with ".3", but we've got a lot of really new and fresh beats that we haven't been using before. It's quite a step forward, I think.



**IT:** You seem to be straying into Jungle and Drum+Bass, can you explain how they differ from straight techno?

**SH:** The main essential difference is that traditional techno is still rooted around 4/4 kick drum, whereas Drum+Bass and Break Beat style don't use that so much. It's more broken up, the kick drum beats. Also Drum+Bass is at a faster tempo than most Trance and Techno. It is where the cutting edge is at the moment. There is incredible stuff coming out in the Drum+Bass area at the moment, it's just mind warping! I heard some new stuff just yesterday, it just blew me away, it's by this real famous DJ called The Grooverider. He's gonna get quite a push over in America, he's got a new deal with Sony for his label called Prototype. It was fantastic, more punchy beats, simpler beats. Almost like techno. It's funny, Techno and Drum+Bass are very much connected. A lot of Drum+Bass guys cite as a major influence a track by Carl Craig, the drummer from Detroit who we collaborated with, called "Bug In A Bass Bin" very often mentioned as one of the prime influences, that style of drumming. Drum+Bass is definitely where the cutting edge is, it never ceases to stimulate! Some of the stuff that they are playing in clubs doesn't get released until 18 months after it was made, DJ's have been playing it, so if you want to check out what's happening at the moment you have to go down to the clubs, see a top DJ is spinning.

**IT:** You've said of your former label, Astralwerks, that they used you in the U.S. to try to lure in old school Prog-rockers and Deadheads into buying into techno. Do you think that may have had an opposite effect in that it exposed younger techno people onto the power in guitar, and in the older Prog and Space-Rock?

**SH:** Possibly, but that's not my aim in life. (laughs) My aim in life is to do the music that I hear in my head. That's what I've always done, that's what I keep doing. In a way I haven't changed at all. It was a bit of a pity that Astralwerks, since they are with Virgin which was the label of Gong and my solo albums, that they may have over emphasized our history. It's not important, where we come from. Sure, we were in Gong, it was a great band, but that was a long time ago. What's important is that we've got our own sound; we make really interesting, original, incredible psychedelic dance music for 1997. That's what we're all about. Obviously there are quite a lot of people who buy our records and come to the gigs who've followed the same journey as us. Purely by guess work we estimate about 25-30% of our audience are people who have followed us from the 70's. The other 70% are people who don't really care what we did before, they just like what we do now. That's what's most important.

**IT:** It seems like a lot more rock bands are turning to techno now, U-2 or Bowie or even Bjork. Is this a real change in them, or do you see them as capitalizing on what's hot now to sell more records.

**SH:** Well, I'm sure that they want to do records that are fresh and inspiring to them. Whatever you might say, the sound of Rock music hasn't changed much over the course of thirty years. When Rock music first exploded, particularly in its more sophisticated psychedelic forms, it was really a cutting edge, radical thing. Now Rock music is a conservative force. Every time a new rock band comes out, they say "Oh, this is the new Beatles, or the new Kinks, or the new Doors". There's nothing really new happening in the strict rock world. Dance music is the only truly new form of music in the 1990's. It is the music of the 1990's, and is totally accepted as such in the U.K. and most of Europe. For various reasons which I don't understand, because America is such a technologically advanced society, I don't understand why techno music and the culture, which has grown from this technology, hasn't become a massive phenomenon in America. I don't understand that. There must be some deep conservative streak in America that we, in other countries, don't understand. It's a mystery. It is changing a bit though, yes? Some techno has been playing on MTV, right?

**IT:** Yep! I think you hit the nail right on the head. I realize the irony of asking this but, with all the media attention being focused on electronica-techno right now do you think it is in danger of becoming that "Next Big Thing" the record executives have been looking for and exploit?

**SH:** I think that the big thing of the '90's is that there's no "Big Thing". There is no next big thing. The whole idea of a next big thing is an illusion. It's a strange dream that people dream. In the U.K. techno is massive, dance music is enormous, but so is Rock. Look at Oasis. They are the most successful Rock band to come out of Britain in the last ten-fifteen years. Pop music, look at the Spice Girls. It's all going off, you know? The idea that electronic music is going to replace Rock is a fallacy. It won't happen. But the fact is that it is there, and it is the cutting edge. That's the point! The

fact that it is so cutting edge means that it will continue to get bigger and bigger, and have a bigger influence on Rock music. Obviously the groups that are breaking through in America are the groups that have successfully fused Rock music and Techno; Prodigy and Chemical Brother-that's their main thing. I'd like to see how it all progresses.

**IT:** By saying "fusing Rock with Techno" do you mean having a lead singer or...

**SH:** Not just having a lead singer. I guarantee that if you put the Prodigy on with any rock band they'd blow them off the stage with the power. The sound of the Chemical Brothers, it's devastating, man! No Rock band could stand up to that, in my opinion, in the right circumstances-right sound system.

**IT:** Do you think that there's nothing to be gotten out of a Rock or Jazz format in the future? Is it a dead language?

**SH:** I wouldn't say that! I've got a multi-channel vision of things. It is rather obvious that Rock music has become a conservative force and a sound that hasn't changed much in thirty years. Most rock music is full of references to the past, where you don't have this in techno. In techno you've got various areas of experimentation which is really the cutting edge. That's what makes it all so exciting, so vital. That's probably why I like it. I've always been on the experimental side of music.

**IT:** I guess you just couldn't be bothered with the Gong reunion this year.

**SH:** Well, I thought it was a good idea! But, it was obvious that it was going to end up being a tour, and a long term thing. Because I am so busy with all the other things I do, it would have been totally out of the question for me to get involved with it. It's far better that they got another guy, named Stephi, who was a friend of ours when we were in Gong. He's doing it really well, and it's far better. It's interesting to see it, Gong was a great band, you know?

**IT:** I've seen your career summed up with a butterfly metaphor, your pre System 7 Prog-rock is the larvae from which the butterfly grew. When you look back on your career what things make you cringe, and what are you really, really proud of.

**SH:** Well, it's an interesting metaphor. You've got to understand that when we were doing so-called Prog rock we didn't see it as that. We saw it as just our sound, it was our thing. Obviously it was musically so it fit in with the "Prog" spectrum but we didn't see it like that. We saw ourselves out on our own edge on our own particular mission, which in a way is still what we are doing. We're not a typical techno band but we can rock a techno audience because we know the techniques, we know the sound. We know how to do it, and do it our way, that's why we've managed to be successful. Looking back I'm pretty proud of everything I've done, really. I mean the main thing that's changed, really, is that I don't sing anymore. I could wind up singing on a System 7 record, there's no rules, it's whatever is really corresponding at the time to what's really exciting me.

**IT:** Of course that wasn't meant to minimize your work by putting a label on it.

**SH:** Oh, no no! It's okay, I know that's the obvious label to categorize it under. I just thought it was worth pointing it out that that's not the way we saw it, and that's probably another clue as to how we ended up doing what we're doing now. We always saw ourselves as being out on the edge doing our own special thing. We didn't feel a part of the Prog-rock movement. In fact we horrified quite a lot of Americans when we got more and more interested in Funk, in the late 70's. We got very interested in Funk; George Clinton, Funkadelic, Parliament. On those later 70's records we did there was a lot of effort to sort of combine the English Canterbury style songwriting with kinds of rough, funky beats. That's the kind of sound we ended up with. That again is another root of what we're doing now. As you know Funkadelic and Clinton, they're from Detroit and they are a primary influence on the Chicago and Detroit style House and Techno.

**IT:** And along those lines, back to System 7, while you are using space age technologies your music tends to recall more natural environments and sounds like; water, whale calls, etc. Is this an intentional direction?

**SH:** Well, we like music that takes you on a journey. We like music that makes you dream. Our ultimate goal is to make just totally psychedelic spaced out dance music with really strong beats that makes you irresistibly want to dance and jump about. At the same time we put really elegant spacial sounds on top that make you drift off and dream. That's our musical goal, we're constantly trying to get a better blend of those two qualities. That's why we called the ".3" album "Fire + Water" because it's those two qualities that are trying to blend.

(continued on Page 30)



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**IT:** Terrance McKenna, and others, have said that technologies like computers and virtual reality can help people transcend the human body and get in touch with the spiritual beings within. It would seem you've been doing that all along with your music. It makes computers seem like the long way around.

**SH:** Well, we are making the music with computers now (laughs). Sort of a spin on that. We see that as part of our realm. We want to make music that helps people get into a better frame of mind. I still dream the psychedelic dream. Psychedelic art, that's what I've been "brainwashed" with since my early teens.

**IT:** Yet, you've been criticized throughout your career for doing that, for being "too positive" and too "new age-ish". That attitude is often linked to what is considered a dead dream of the Sixties. Do you see a general return to those values in your younger audience...and your older audience?

**SH:** The psychedelic aspect has expanded and grown over the last thirty years, but I don't think what young people who dream the psychedelic dream are into now is really like the Sixties at all. I think these are completely different circumstances. I'm bored stiff with the Sixties. People keep going on about the Sixties. It's; "The Sixties this, and the Sixties that". I hear people say the Nineties are the new Sixties. I say, go see a psychiatrist, man! It's the Nineties, what's the problem? It's just boring. Who cares? That's another thing I find so tedious about alot of Rock music. I keep hearing riffs from the Beatles and riffs from the Stones, riffs from the Kinks. Gimme a break! What kind of culture is this? We're approaching the Twenty-First Century and we've got a whole information revolution going on, the world is in complete chaos. It's an amazing time to be alive, let be here now!

**IT:** What seems to be the future for Techno/Dance music and culture? Or, for that matter any band like the Ozric Tentacles or Senser or any small underground type bands that can't jump right into the corporate mold?

**SH:** Thankfully there's still a large underground. It's still possible to do alot.

**IT:** Back to System 7 specifically, what's next apart from the new album? Possibly a tour in the U.S.?

**SH:** We'd like to come to the United States. We do carry a massive light system, we've got a lighting operator, he's very important for our show. We've got alot of equipment, got our own sound crew. Really, if we can't come to America and do our proper show I don't think we're going to come. It costs alot. At the moment we don't have any specific plans to come, although we'd like to. I don't want to do any more shows where I play guitar with a DJ, fun though it is. I don't want people going away thinking that it's System 7. We've got a really powerful live show and we'd like to do it in America. We've got some interesting festival shows coming up in Europe. We're playing Glastonbury again. That's the biggest of them all.

**IT:** No hope for a Stonehenge this year?

**SH:** Stonehenge, that's long gone. (laughs) I was never particularly a great fan of the Stonehenge festivals. I always found it too chaotic and disorganized. I was more a Glastonbury man!

**IT:** Are you still working with Club Dog and the Dog Brothers at all?

**SH:** Megadog? Yeah we played a New Year's Eve gig for them in Manchester at the beginning of this year. It was great. And we're doing the Brighton festival with on May 24th. We'll be doing quite alot with them.

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
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